Jack Beatty on Ireland's Everlasting Troubles

Dennis Wrong on Daniel Bell • Angus Wilson on Alan Paton

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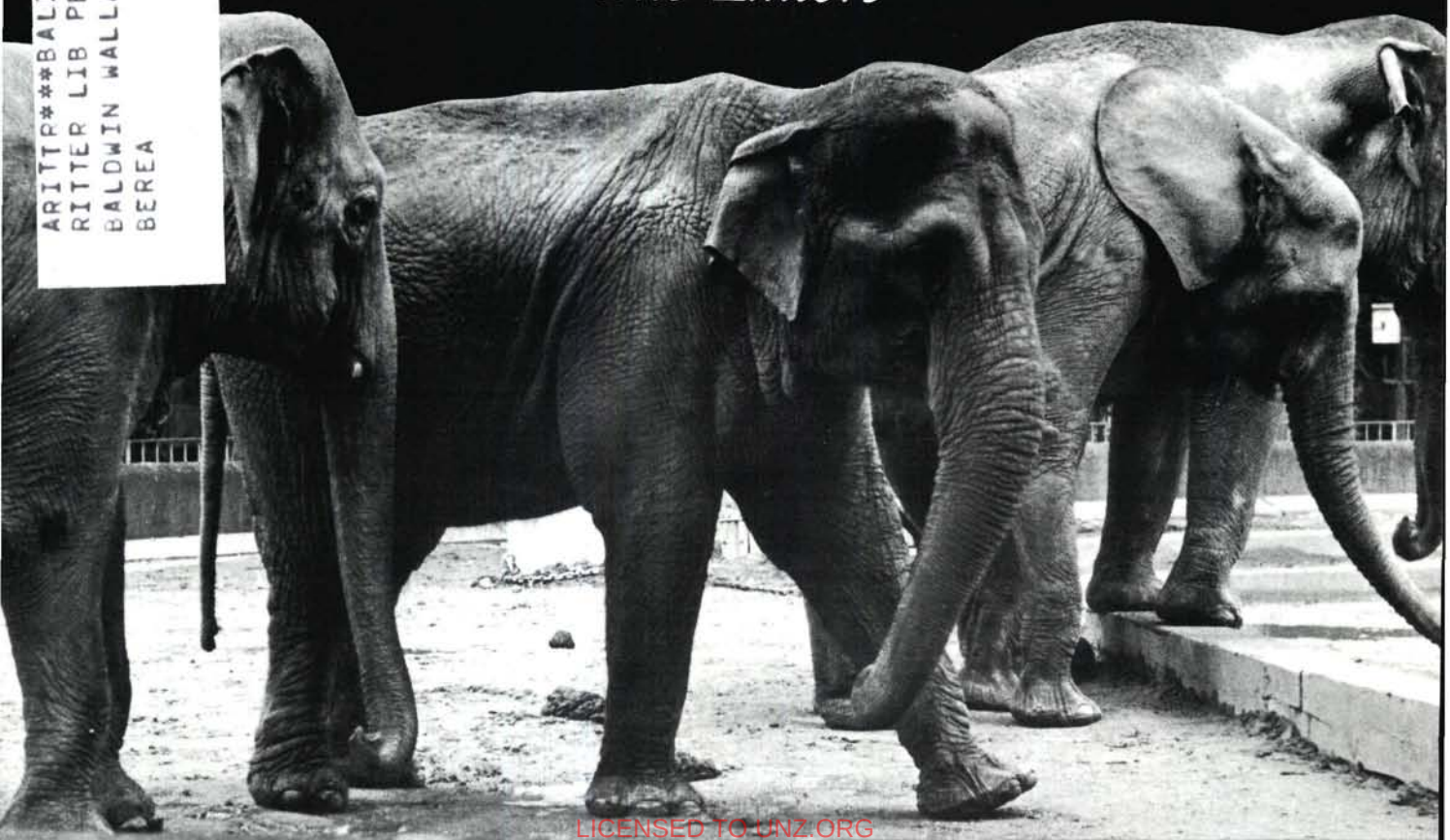

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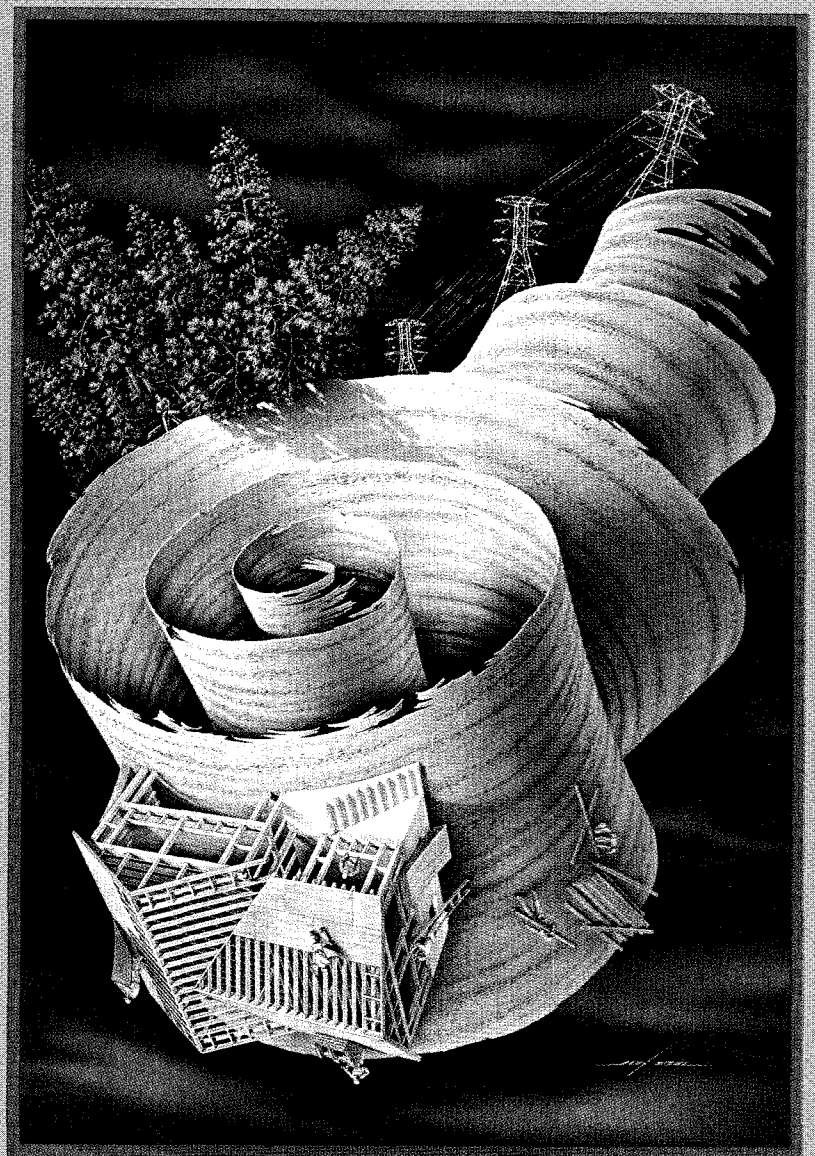
What do you see when you look at a wood shaving?



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TRB

from Washington
November 15, 1980

In Transition

The American post-election transition is one of the most delicate and dangerous in government. The lame-duck session of Congress meets here this week; not the new Congress, of course, but the old—Democrats licking their wounds, Republicans exulting over the biggest repudiation of a president since Hoover in 1932 (who got only six states and 59 electoral votes). Now, for an interval of 77½ days while the old Congress tries to write a budget, the United States has, in effect, two presidents. The 20th Amendment cut the bizarre interval in half, but still for two months the two-headed monster operates. Nearly always there is a crisis in the interval; there is a crisis now.

Eight times since 1913 one party has ousted another from the White House, and here is what happened in some of the transition intervals: Wilson beat Taft in 1913 and there was a Mexican revolution. Harding took over from Wilson in 1921 and the League of Nations fight continued in the transition. Ike followed Truman in 1953 and the Korean War continued. Kennedy succeeded Ike in 1961 and, in the transition interval, Ike broke relations with Cuba. Nixon followed LBJ in 1969 and the US-North Vietnam peace talks in Paris broke down. Carter followed Ford in 1977 as economic indices slipped. Today the hostage crisis is at its peak. How about the frozen Iranian assets? And Walter Mondale told CBS on October 26 that Carter would bring up SALT II shortly, "perhaps the single most important issue" of the campaign. Who is in charge?

A president-elect's first great crisis begins even while his supporters are throwing their hats in the air. His projects are sketchy, he has no Cabinet, acrimony is still rife, and suddenly everybody turns to ask him his plans. Jimmy Carter has yielded with grace; in defeat he has shown class; he has promised to cooperate with his conqueror in every way. Ronald Reagan desperately needs to pick an economic adviser and a foreign affairs adviser to rush to Washington for joint discussions. The worst transition in modern history was in 1932 when Hoover and FDR couldn't agree, and by the Inauguration every bank in the country was closed. Now comes a new test of the strange American system.

My own judgment is that SALT II is dead. It will be a blow to our allies. British, French, and West German heads of government all urged it, and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt is expected to be over here shortly and will discuss NATO arms if he comes. Richard V. Allen, on-again, off-again senior foreign policy adviser to Reagan, says the latter supports the GOP platform demand for arms "superiority" (now called "margin of safety") and thinks the Russians will accede to it if nudged by an arms race.

It gives us the creeps. Our former Moscow ambassador, Averell Harriman, says, "I have met with every Soviet leader from Lenin to Brezhnev. . . . Moscow will sacrifice what it takes to remain equal, as we will, too. The conclusion will not be superiority; the end will be an arms race without end." The Chinese already have warned the president-elect to swallow any lingering sympathies with Taiwan.

President-elect Reagan may be more moderate, however, than was hawkish, former actor Reagan. Candidate Reagan moved substantially toward the political middle after the campaign began. With his great victory the question is whether he will move back again. The election has pushed Congress several paces to the right. No more chance of national health insurance or labor law reform. And as to the third branch of government, the non-elected, life-tenured Supreme Court, there are five members over 70; more and more it writes laws and acts as a legislative body. Nixon made four appointments, Carter none, and Reagan now may make several. What kind of appointments? All we know is that he deplored Senate rejection of conservative judge Clement Haynsworth when Nixon named him.

I have an idea Reagan will give us an affable nine-to-five presidency, not particularly extremist, surrounded by conservative corporate interests that know exactly what they want. Also that he will use up about a year (as Eisenhower did, as Carter did, as other outsiders did) learning the Washington ropes and ultimately finding, to his surprise and perhaps consternation, how paralyzed the president is (at least on domestic issues) by the so-called "Iron Triangle" of special-interest groups, federal bureaucracy, and congressional committees. It sometimes amazes presidents to find, after they have ordered something done on the domestic side, that it isn't done. There nearly always is strain, too, between the presidential coterie of intimate staff (the Georgia Mafia, the Texas Mafia, the California Mafia) and the Cabinet.

It was the longest and costliest presidential campaign in history. The 1984 campaign already has begun: John Anderson virtually announced his candidacy on election night, and Kennedy, Mondale, and probably Bush are waiting in the wings. I suspect Reagan's age will limit him to one term. There have been five presidents, incidentally, in the last 20 years; two-term presidents require happier times.

Looking back over the campaign, I think that the result was predictable, at least in general terms. This column, November 24, 1979, hazarded the guess that Carter would get the nomination over Kennedy in spite of two-to-one odds the other way, on the basis of personal factors that later became obvious. Another prophecy followed: "I am inclined to think Carter will be defeated in the election if he is nominated. . . ." Why? "The hardest thing for Carter to beat next year probably will be the economy. . . . The recession is likely to come in summer and fall, just when it will help the opposition most. It bodes ill for any Democratic nominee." It was the miserable economic score, I believe, that finally did Carter in. (This fallible columnist also predicted that Dewey would beat Truman in 1948 and was chagrined when the luckless forecast appeared after election day.)

In foreign affairs the game of journalistic forecasting is out of the question. What can anybody predict today, for example, about the world's greatest problem, the nuclear arms race, with a treaty that the Senate won't ratify and with a new man stepping into the White House who says he wants to begin negotiating all over again? Here is what Chancellor Schmidt said a year ago when asked what American rejection of SALT II might mean: "How could you in the future depend on a policy carried out by an American president? It would be a disastrous blow to the necessary leadership!"

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

November 15, 1980

Unburdened

In his concession statement last Tuesday night, Jimmy Carter quoted an old Yiddish proverb, "God gives burdens, also shoulders." But by the next day, no later than the morrow of the election, in fact, he was already giving notice that he wasn't willing to shoulder the burden of responsibility for his own defeat. The election was not "a personal turning against me," Carter said. So, in his eyes, what did cause the crushing defeat? Well, just about everything else: the hostages, memories of Bert Lance, the doubling of oil prices, false impressions of Hamilton Jordan as a drug-taker, the admission of Cuban refugees, the "downside" of the Camp David agreement, "human fallibilities in any administration," the Panama Canal treaty, the appointments of blacks to judgeships, Ted Kennedy, the rate of inflation, and, of course, the people themselves, or at least their frustrations. It was as if he was responsible for none of these. "Those kinds of things do come up . . . no one could have prevented. . . ." Then they must have happened independently of him. Perhaps these developments grabbed history by the throat. It was, Carter said, "inevitable," which is what everyone says who wants to disown the consequences of his actions, in this case an administration at once so cynical and so bumbling that it threatened every candidate tied to it, even if by nothing more substantial than party designation.

The Democratic party became important to Jimmy Carter only in the last weeks of the campaign when, facing defeat, a president who had barely governed as a Democrat, and who had viewed the party as a vehicle instead of a commitment, tried to make his reelection the measure of how the voters felt about FDR and Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy. The fate of Jimmy Carter shouldn't be seen as a test of the Democratic party, and even less should it be seen as a test of liberalism. Carter's defeat has led to a routing of liberals, but it is not a repudiation of the liberal idea itself. In every single state where a US Senate candidate important to liberals lost, that candidate ran far ahead of Carter. If the voters of Idaho had not repudiated Jimmy Carter by a margin of fully 45 percent, Frank Church would not have lost by one percent. If Carter had not lost Indiana by 18 percent, Iowa by 12 percent, New Hampshire by 30 percent, Washington by 11 percent, and old progressive Wisconsin by five percent, it is likely that Birch Bayh, John Culver, John Durkin, Warren Magnuson, and Gaylord Nelson, whose defeats were narrow ones—one and two percent, some of them—would have been returned to the Senate and would be chairing committees that now will go to the likes of Orrin Hatch, Strom Thurmond, and John Tower. Of the leading senatorial liberals only George McGovern seemed to have lost without the benefit of Carter's coattails, going down in South Dakota by 20 percent. The one consolation among the grim tidings about the Senate is that Gary Hart eked out a two percent margin of victory in Colorado where Carter lost by 24 percent.

In the dark hour of defeat, liberals are well rid of

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drawing by Vint Lawrence

Jimmy Carter. In his late October desperation, he tried to make foreign policy—or, as he put it, the choice between war and peace—the basis of the voters' preference. Voters preferred Reagan not necessarily because they were persuaded that he would reestablish the mythic American century in world affairs, but because they knew from experience that Carter had no coherent convictions at all about how to maintain an American role, American influence, and American strength in the ongoing defense of free societies. This concern is not an alien concern to liberals. It was liberals who first recognized the danger of, and took up the fight against, the Axis powers; and liberals also who, more clearly than most conservatives and Republicans (then still psychologically wedded to isolationism), saw the need and opportunity for containment of communism in the period immediately after World War II. The election of Reagan and the ascendancy of various GOP nuclear enthusiasts in the Senate challenge the liberals and other Democrats to formulate a foreign and defense policy which does not shrug off the Soviet military build-up and the pressure by the Soviets and their surrogates alike on our most faithful and democratic friends and on our most critical interests around the world. Reagan probably will not make criticism easy by peopling his international affairs apparatus with the know-nothings and crazies whom the Carter campaign conjured up for the voters as their destiny under a Republican administration. The president-elect knows, and if not he should know, that the stewardship of foreign policy must be vested in individuals who can restore the confidence of allies that this nation has both the intelligence and the resolve to operate in a complicated international system which, however unstable from multiple points, is still primarily defined by the adversary confrontation between the democratic and communist blocs. Were Reagan to appoint someone like Henry Kissinger as secretary of state and someone like Henry Jackson as secretary of defense, the entire political climate would be clarified in ways that could only benefit the US and what is left of the alliance. It would be easier for liberals to struggle politically against an administration turned over to those ambitious primitives huddling on the fringes of the Reagan campaign, easier to win elections over them another day. But it would not be good for the country, and it would not oblige liberals to be discerning about either what they are against or what they are for.

One of President Carter's most thoughtful lieutenants suggested with chagrin last week that one reason Democrats are frantic about the prospect of a conservative tide is a suspicion that on many matters the conservatives have been right. On inflation, for exam-

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Correspondence

Throwing stones

To the editors:

It may be, as Rael Jean Isaac suggests in "*Time* Against Israel" (*TNR*, October 18), that *Time* magazine is inaccurate and possibly biased in its coverage of the Middle East. It seems to this reader, however, that in all fairness you might commission a follow-up piece on the growing bias of *The New Republic* in its coverage of the same country since Martin Peretz became its editor-in-chief and publisher. It's a rare issue of *The New Republic* that does not contain at least one major and usually one minor article promoting Prime Minister Menachem Begin as a reasonable seeker of truth and peace in contrast to the venal activities of those usually characterized as "Arab terrorists."

I've been a *New Republic* reader for 15 years. To me, the Middle East is not synonymous with Israel. The Middle East has many points of interest to me, including oil politics in the Persian Gulf, the ongoing agony of Lebanon, the Iraq-Iran war, the plight of Palestinian refugees, Anwar Sadat's quest for economic development and peace for his country, and Israel's struggle to maintain its existence as a state. I wish the editors of *The New Republic* would not restrict their coverage solely to the last item. I also think to throw stones at *Time* magazine for bias is ludicrous in light of *The New Republic*'s lopsided coverage of the same subject.

Timothy W. McNally
Putnam, Connecticut

The editors reply:

Anyone who thinks this magazine has been sympathetic to Menachem Begin cannot have been reading it very carefully.

Annotated Nabokov

To the editors:

I find Robert Alter, in his stimulating review of Nabokov's so-called *Lectures on Literature*, far too charitable for what is essentially a fraudulent publication (*TNR*, October 4). My opening gambit would have been: "At $19.95, this handsome volume is a steal. From the reader, that is."

True, the editor, Fredson Bowers, scrupulously lists the various kinds of manipulation to which he has had to resort in order to produce a readable text. And the numerous photographic reproductions of VN's annotated copies do reveal the extent of the salvaging operations that were undertaken. The sad, simple truth is that there are no Nabokovian Lectures on Literature. They were once delivered, with the help of notes, charts, reminders, quotations, and they have vanished forever into thin air, or (one hopes) into the not-so-thin minds of those lucky Cornell students a generation ago.

It would have been far more honest, albeit less profitable, to offer the volume as *The Notebooks of VN*, or better still, as *VN's Annotated Anthology of Modern European Novels*. For without extended quotations, the book would have appeared like a modest treasure-trove of bones, flints, refuse, and, here and there, a lucent colored bead. I would guess that a third or more of the volume consists of quotations (and now we understand the function of the large, spacious type, a Greek gift to the reader). What we have here is something like a collection of European butterflies lovingly skewered on the page with Nabokovian pins.

Mario Maurin
Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

George who?

To the editors:

Is is refreshing to discover a political columnist who, when referring to our founding fathers, has the imagination to cite someone other than Washington, Adams, Jefferson, or Madison. TRB's reference to George Mason (*TNR*, October 18) certainly caught our attention at George Mason University, the state university of Northern Virginia.

Most Americans do not know that Thomas Jefferson's "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" restates almost identical sentiments in the Virginia Declaration of Rights written by George Mason in the early summer of 1776. Nor that the first 10 amendments to the United States Constitution were largely ideas that flowed from Mason's quill into the text of that same Declaration of Rights.

None of this, however, should be surprising; all the 18th-century Northern Virginia statesmen were acquainted and in some cases, like that of Mason and Jefferson, were close friends. Thomas Jefferson never pretended originality in his draft of the American Declaration of Independence. As representatives of 18th-century Enlightenment thought, all of these men were debating the merits of similar ideas.

Name recognition outside Northern Virginia has been a problem for us. When someone in our area refers to George Mason, often one must reply, "Do you mean the man or the university?" The rest of America on hearing name responds, "Who's George Mason?" We think one of America's most distinguished founding fathers deserves better. Thanks, TRB, the man and the university needed that.

William H. Cohn
Assistant to the President
George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia

Monkey business

To the editors:

You have incorrectly identified one of the movie stars on your November 1 cover as Diana Lynn. That is not Diana Lynn; that is Bonzo. I do not see how you could have made such an ungallant mistake. Diana Lynn had a charmingly feline look about the eyes, but she was in no way simian.

J. Quinn Brisben
Chicago, Illinois

NEA castigation

To the editors:

In reading Stephen Chapman's "The Teachers' Coup" (*TNR*, October 11) we learn, among other things, that the NEA was responsible for Jimmy Carter's victory in the 1976 and Senator Kennedy's convention defeat in 1980; that the NEA opposes Ronald Reagan simply because Reagan plans to abolish the Department of Education; that the NEA controls (get this) 72 US senators; and that when teachers organize and act for change they do so out of self-interest and they are, in fact, anti-education and anti-child.

Of all his assertions, Chapman's contention that the NEA was a power at the recent Democratic convention is closest to the truth, although this, too, is exaggerated. The NEA controlled no state delegations and it is in this that real power would lie. It was on the platform task force that teachers had their strongest power base with nearly 25

(continued on page 38)

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ple, the Carter record of little action and big talk more than amply feeds the suspicion that the Democrats are indentured to the interest groups whose privileges and entitlements form the foundation on which inflation rises ever higher. The right-wing sweep gives Reagan an opportunity to offend all of those interest groups, though he nuzzled up to quite a few during his campaign. Honest liberals would be hard-put to complain if he used his mandate in this way. But the man who thinks federal deficits cause inflation is unlikely to develop such vision and nerve. If anything, he is likely to take on only the groups that already are least advantaged by the rewards and most encumbered by the inequities of the system, both historically and at present. Liberals are morally and politically committed to defend these people, but not to defend each and every program that purports to serve them. Liberals also need to insist, and doubtless they will have many opportunities to do so, that austerity be applied, or government-subsidized indulgences be denied, first and most directly to those who can bear them most easily.

Liberals in defeat are naturally inclined to search for a leader. Last week in Washington, some fixers already were talking up Ted Kennedy and Fritz Mondale for 1984. It is still much too early to anoint a tribune and probably far too late to anoint one out of a past which so many Americans want so eagerly now to move beyond. Maybe Mondale will be able to build a record independent of the man he served too faithfully as vice president. But there are, in any event, other serious, articulate, and experienced individuals in the party who will make claims on our support. But before we think about who should lead us, let us begin to understand, in the moment of adversity ahead, what we and they really believe.

White House Watch

The Last Mile

On the last Saturday of the 1980 presidential campaign, at Abilene, Texas, Jimmy Carter got closer than he could have realized then to indicating some of the lesser reasons for his impending defeat. He cluttered up a taut speech draft, the best one prepared for his final drive for reelection, with extraneous references to everything from unemployment to oil prices to his personal religion. They stretched from the original three folio pages to 10 pages the delivered text of a speech that was intended, as he eventually got around to saying, to set forth his "hopes and plans for the next four years—our common agenda for the second term of office which I hope to serve as your President." Press Secretary Jody Powell indicated that the speech or something like it might be televised on paid time if the Carter campaign, richly supported as it was by public funds, had enough money left for bought promotion. As things turned out, most of the delivered effusion is fit only for moldering in presidential files and only two passages are worth quoting now.

"First," Carter said, "I want to say that I'm confident about the future of our nation. . . . The major reason for confidence is that we have learned. We have learned so much about the challenges that have confronted us in the last few months, and we've laid the foundations now to meet those challenges in the future. We know we face dangers in the world, but we've learned to use our strength wisely, in the service of our real interests [and] our real values." That's a lot for this or any other President to have to learn in his fourth year in office.

Carter also said: "In four years as President I've learned a great deal about myself and I've learned a great deal about this country. I've learned that it's not always enough just to be right. We must set priorities on the most important work or it may never be done. We need to make sure that the people understand our programs and our policies and our commitment and then build a consensus among the people of this nation to get your support. We've learned to do that. . . ."

Had they learned? Some Carter assistants began saying toward the end of his first year at the White House that he and they had to learn to project him and his programs adequately, build a consensus, and all the rest. Some were saying last summer that he and they still had to learn. They were blaming the shortage of public and media support for Carter programs on his and his assistants' failure to demonstrate that the programs were as understandable and good as he and his people thought they were.

Staff director Alonzo McDonald, a professional management whiz and former deputy special representative for trade negotiations who was recruited in 1979 to supply the White House operation with the talents for administration that Hamilton Jordan, then the staff chief, never pretended to possess, prepared a stack of memos that he planned to give Carter after the election. They aim at strengthening the presidency—any presidency—by strengthening the staff and Cabinet structure in terms of organization, personnel, and presidential control, and among other things at setting the priorities and building the consensus that Carter discussed in Abilene. The memos were to have helped Carter prepare for his second term.

Coming

White House Unemployment:

the Pierre Salinger Solution.

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Now they presumably will go to the Carter and Reagan transition teams which McDonald will be working with as a White House coordinator.

The remainder of this report presents a few highlights from Carter's performance on the campaign road when he believed that he had at least a chance to win and, at the end, when he knew that he had no chance. He came off very well in those stages, it seemed to me from a distance, excepting one abysmally low point. That point came when, after months of ignoring and thereby demeaning independent candidate John Anderson, Carter demeaned himself by begging Anderson supporters to recognize that their man and the President share many goals and that they therefore had better give him, Carter, their votes. The night before, in Milwaukee, Carter encountered a raucous band of Anderson hecklers and, seizing a microphone, told them: "You support a good man. I'm sure he'd want me to speak." After being told they'd be sorry Wednesday morning if they persisted in voting for Anderson and thus helping Reagan defeat him, they let him speak in peace.

At Columbia, South Carolina, a shrine of the old south, and in Texas, which southern purists exclude from the true south, Carter tugged at southern hearts and exaggerated his actual hardships as a farm lad in South Georgia. According to his sister Gloria and his daddy's late brother, Uncle Alton, childhood life as he knew it on the Carter farm near Plains bore little resemblance to the description the President purveyed in Columbia: "The bell rang on our farm at four in the morning. . . . We caught the mules . . . waiting until it got bright enough to see how to plow," etc., etc. Also at Columbia: "And I'd like to ask you as a special favor, as a neighbor, as a Southerner, as an incumbent President, as a Democrat, as a friend, to go a second mile for me these last few days." In South Carolina and elsewhere in the south, Georgia and two other states excepted, too few of them went with him as they had in 1976.

In the last days as throughout the campaign, once he took to the road after months of contrived seclusion at the White House, Carter endured a plenitude of kooks and simple importunates at his cherished town meetings. A National Welfare Rights Organization official in Pittsburgh, Frankie Mae Getu, told Carter that "you never invite any women" to citizen conferences at the White House. Carter: "Now that's not true, Frankie Mae." She: "Well, you haven't invited any poor women." He: ". . . I'll invite you the next time." A Columbia high school teacher who said he had been a Vietnam War pilot accused Carter of belonging to "a semi-secret organization whose avowed purpose is world socialism, the Council on Foreign Relations." Carter said he'd never belonged to the council. The questioner insisted he had and finally conceded: "I'm surprised. All right. I stand corrected." The inquisitor may have had in mind that bane of many rightists, the Rockefeller Trilateral Commission, where Carter found his national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski.

An evangelical Christian group's charge in radio ads that Carter advocated abortion (untrue) and tolerated homosexuals (true, sort of) caused Carter to construe the allegation as an attack on his religion and to say in Memphis: "My religious beliefs are very precious to me and I've never tried to criticize those who worshiped differently from me. Until this year I've never had anybody question the sincerity of my belief in God and my commitment of my life as a Christian believing in Jesus Christ as my savior."

So it went until election-day morning in Plains, on the railroad station platform where he wept tears of joy after his triumph in 1976 and, this year, wept in the knowledge that he faced defeat. That night, back in Washington, he conceded early and gracefully to Ronald Reagan and said he'd be lying if he said it didn't hurt. According to his sisters Ruth and Gloria, he was close to cracking up mentally for a while after he lost his first race for the governorship of Georgia in 1966. There was no sign of that when he and his family retired to Camp David the morning after he was defeated again, on a scale that astonished Ronald Reagan. Granting that Carter was still hoping and electioneering in Fort Worth on November 1, something he said there provides a measure of the blow on election night: "This campaign does mean a lot to me personally because I've invested a lot of years of my life in building a foundation now for the greater future of our country. But what matters most is not what it means to the candidates but it's what it means to millions of Americans around this country just like you. Think about the consequences for a moment in your own life if you wake up Wednesday morning and discover that we'll have a Republican administration for the next four years. Think about it."

That's good advice. Think about it.

John Osborne

The hostage mess.

Endgame

President-elect Reagan would do well to fasten his immediate attention on efforts currently under way to secure the release of the 52 American hostages in Iran. Since the Cleveland debate and right up to election day, the Carter administration has paraded its view that rearming the Iranians in their war against Iraq is an acceptable way to square accounts with Iran for the imprisonment of diplomatic personnel by Iranian terrorists. Such a trade-off was unacceptable before the

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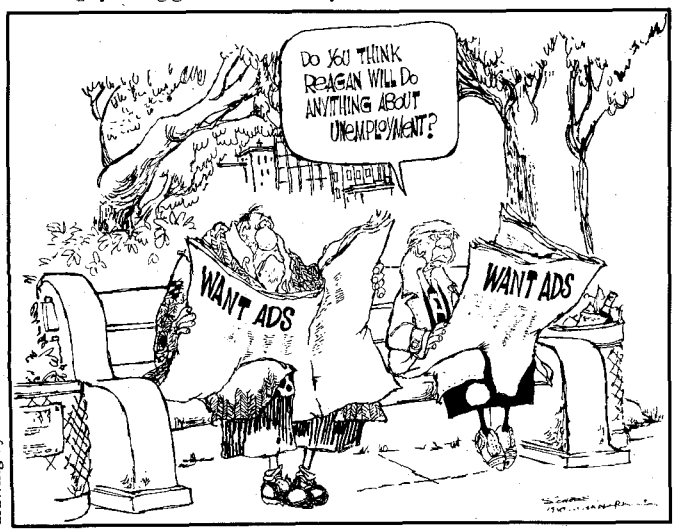
election, and it is unacceptable now.

Though the president showed restraint in responding to the demands of the Iranian *Majlis*, pointing out that any conditions agreed upon by the US would have to adhere to American law and the Constitution, his intention to supply the Iranians with cluster bombs, antitank and air-to-air missiles, and millions of dollars' worth of ammunition and spare parts was both skewed and desperate. In the debate, Carter declared that it had been his "consistent policy" to release the assets in exchange for the hostages. This is hard to swallow. The president froze those assets last November 14 explicitly to protect financial claims by the US and US companies against Iran. Whatever steps, if any, the administration took to avoid the legal entanglements that have resulted from the pressing of those claims do not suggest a high degree of planning.

Carter made no mention of using the assets as bargaining chips until October 20 during a television call-in show while campaigning in Youngstown, Ohio. In the meantime, of the $10 to $13 billion of frozen assets, a New York district court judge had attached a total of three billion dollars against private claims; another four billion dollars was tied up in US subsidiaries or foreign banks abroad, subject to host country law; an estimated $280 million worth of military materiel (out of a total of some $500 million) earmarked for Iran, but not yet purchased, had been ordered dispersed by the president when he imposed trade sanctions on Iran in April; US banks had recovered at least a half-billion from the assets by declaring outstanding Iranian loans in default; and another half-billion was held by private concerns.

That left some $2.35 billion worth of securities and gold in the New York Federal Reserve Bank, $400 million for Iranian arms purchases in the US Treasury, and some $220 million worth of paid-for military equipment on hand. These were the tattered remains of the Iranian assets central to Carter's plan. The figures above are necessarily inexact, since the government has not officially indicated the disposition of the frozen assets. But the evidence, however rough, strongly suggests that by mid-October the Carter people were scrambling to patch together some way to retrieve the assets for use in a hostage deal. The purchased weaponry, spare parts, and other military equipment, it should be noted, were probably about all that was left of the assets the administration could get its hands on quickly.



drawing by Bill Schorr

This is the situation Ronald Reagan faces during his transition to power. It surely will come as no surprise to him that an arms-for-hostages trade, though raised in the larger context of the Carter administration's sudden concern about the possible dismemberment and subsequent Soviet penetration of Iran, would be a disastrous signal to our allies, who would see us humbled once more before the Iranian terrorists and once more switching course. It also would unnerve the jumpy, so-called "moderate" Arab states backing Iraq, who would see our thus far desirable neutrality shattered by a tilt toward Khomeini's subversive Shiite revolution; and the Soviets undoubtedly would feel compelled to step up their lackadaisical support for Iraq at such a flagrant violation of US neutrality.

Reagan, presumably, knows this, since two of his most prominent Republican supporters, Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger, have come out strongly against supplying any arms to Iran, however noble-sounding the intention. Kissinger called a possible release of arms to the Iranians "the issue at which I gag." Ford expressed his concern about the Middle East becoming "a quagmire . . . worse than Vietnam" if the US resupplied Iran with arms.

The president-elect should heed their advice. President Carter, generously, already has promised "to go the second mile in accommodating" Reagan's views during the transition interval. Reagan should work closely with the Carter administration to see to it that no military materiel is part of the hostage negotiations. Nor should loose talk about "non-lethal" equipment be considered anything but a red herring. Would a hydraulic pump have been considered "lethal" if it enabled US helicopters to deposit commandos in Tehran? Reagan should press Carter to focus on the release of some portion of the financial assets first. Certainly the Federal Reserve and Treasury deposits could be secured with relative ease and in a manageable time, and their transfer to the Iranians could be used as the initial guarantee of good will that would assure the physical release of all the hostages. This could be followed by negotiating some equitable arrangement for processing the myriad US claims against Iran, perhaps by means of a joint American-Iranian commission, as suggested unofficially by the head of Iran's central bank, Ali Reza Nobari, or through administration-sponsored legislation establishing a federal claims commission.

But as long as Iran is engaged in its war with Iraq, any consideration of releasing arms or military equipment to Iran should be dropped, and any direct Iranian inquiries on the subject should be stalled or brushed off. So far there have been none, suggesting to some

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that the Iranians understand the political delicacy of the subject. With the assets, or some portion of them, unfrozen and back in Iranian hands, Iran's government can buy arms and materiel from any number of other countries besides the US, as it apparently has from North Korea already. But while Iran is on a war footing, the US cannot violate its neutrality and reward the Iranian terrorists by supplying military aid to Iran.

Russ Hoyle

Politics

A Doubtful New Order

The 1980 election obviously was a Democratic debacle and a disaster for liberals, but did it signal a basic ideological or partisan realignment in the United States? Was it another 1896 or 1932, a watershed election which will shift party dominance for the remainder of the century? Many election-night and morning-after analysts are saying that it was, based largely on the magnitude of the Republican sweep. But I think political dominance in America is still up for grabs, available to the party that can take advantage of the opportunities 1980 has provided. The Democrats aren't necessarily out of it yet.

The Republican party's advantages obviously are greater now than the Democrats', with Ronald Reagan granted the mandate of a 44-state, 489-electoral-vote victory over Jimmy Carter, who managed to carry only six states and the District of Columbia, with 49 electoral votes. Reagan's electoral landslide exceeded even Lyndon Johnson's 486-vote triumph in 1964, although Reagan's popular vote of 51 percent was far short of Johnson's 61.1. And unlike any Republican president since Dwight Eisenhower in 1952, Reagan will begin governing with his party controlling at least one branch of Congress, thanks to the stunning 12-seat GOP Senate triumph. The Democrats maintain control of the House, but the shock of losing 33 seats and the fear of even greater Republican gains in 1982 is likely to soften them to Reagan's persuasive powers.

Angry Democrats may try to blame the 1980 debacle largely on Jimmy Carter, and he certainly bears a heavy share of the responsibility. He failed as president, as a candidate, and as a party leader. The thundering Reagan victory was an expression of the public's consistently low approval ratings of Carter's performance on the economy and foreign policy. And because he had no record on which to campaign positively, Carter squandered in negative campaigning his one great political asset, the public's belief that he was an honorable, decent fellow. Contrary to Carter's portrayal of him as a racist warmonger, Reagan ended up the nice-guy candidate of 1980, although large chunks of the electorate seemed still in doubt about which candidate to favor until the final weekend of the campaign. By then, Carter's polling showed, the Iran hostage issue had reemerged to remind voters how miserably Carter had performed for four years and how much of America's destiny was beyond America's control. Because the race was so close in so many states, the eight-point popular shift against Carter just before the election had a devastating effect on the electoral vote.

Carter doubtless contributed to the demise of some Democratic senators and representatives. Practically every liberal who lost ran well ahead of Carter and must have been dragged some by the president. And over the four years of his presidency, Carter did nothing to build the Democratic party either organizationally or financially. Quite the contrary, he cannibalized it to run his own reelection campaign, leaving Democrats all down the line vulnerable to attack from well-financed and well-organized Republicans. Carter's disregard of his party extended even to his behavior on election night, when he conceded defeat at 9:50 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, with polls still open in the west. Carter obviously cared more about establishing a prime-time reputation as a good loser than about the welfare of local Democratic candidates struggling to turn out a vote. Reports are that Carter wanted to concede even earlier than he did—thereby jeopardizing even more local candidates—but was dissuaded by his staff from doing so.

So there are grounds for accusing Carter of dragging his party down to defeat, but the party and its candidates also are responsible—and the Republican party and its candidates also deserve their fair share of credit. Democratic Senate candidates ran ahead of Carter, but still they lost by healthy margins. Birch Bayh in Indiana, John Culver in Iowa, and Warren Magnuson in Washington all lost by eight points and George McGovern in South Dakota by 19. Jimmy Carter was not to blame for all of that. The fact is that Ronald Reagan and the Republican party presented a consistent alternative world view to that of the Democrats, and the public decided to try it. It is a simplistic world view, a John Wayne view, but it is thoroughly American and of obvious appeal: the United States can do anything it wants, if it has the will. It can be prosperous, strong, respected, and moral if the people are allowed merely to exercise their freedom. This was, in fact, Jimmy Carter's basic message in 1976, but somehow he forgot or never believed it. He came to accept the liberal dogma that there is no avoiding bureaucracy, inflation, lower living standards at home, and reduced influence in the world outside. Carter and the Democrats told people that the United States was caught up by forces beyond its control. Reagan came along to tell them they *could* control the future, all of it, if they wanted to.

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It may be dangerous for the United States if Reagan tries during these next four years to recapture the nation's lost greatness. We may have an economic crash or a war if the effort fails. But the experiment is worth making, if only so that the country will be satisfied once and for all that someone really tried to recreate the (relatively) happy world of 1950. The conservatives now have their shot, and if they fail they can be called upon to hold their peace. If they succeed, and do it safely, they deserve to remain in power for a generation.

There are reasons to think they will not succeed, either substantively or politically. Hyper-inflation may be the legacy of Democrats, liberals, and Keynesians, but now it is Ronald Reagan's problem to solve. The process is bound to be painful, requiring sacrifices by powerful and large interest groups. Does Ronald Reagan have the political courage to demand the sacrifices? His campaign suggests he doesn't. In fact, as a cure for inflation, he offered the electorate a free lunch in the form of big tax cuts. Confronted with the question of what government programs he would eliminate, his answer was: none. To reassert American leadership in the world will require imagination and boldness, not just increasing the US defense budget. The evidence from Reagan's campaign, though, is that he will be a passive and unimaginative leader.

On balance, it's good that Reagan has a Republican Senate and a frightened House to work with. No one will be able to accuse the Democratic party of thwarting the GOP in its attempt to reshape America and the world. However, I suspect that America will see enough raw, rigid, right-wing reaction in two years of GOP rule in the Senate to make it turn away in horror in 1982. There are a few clear-headed modernists joining the GOP ranks in the Senate such as Paula Hawkins of Florida and Slade Gorton of Washington, but many of the newcomers are incendiary rightists and Moral Majoritarians such as Charles Grassley of Iowa, Jeremiah Denton of Alabama, Alfonse D'Amato of New York, James Abdnor of South Dakota, and Steve Symms of Idaho. They will join an already strong faction led by Jesse Helms, Paul Laxalt, and Strom Thurmond. The country may think it wants to slow down government growth, do away with intrusive bureaucracy and regulation, eliminate quotas, cut welfare, increase defense, and reduce the speed of social change. But does it want to abandon environmental controls, turn over energy resources to oil companies, and pass a constitutional amendment banning abortion? If the Senate rightists begin pushing hard for their agenda, the public well may decide it made a mistake in giving the GOP a majority.

The Republicans certainly have a great opportunity now to become the country's dominant party. But the GOP has had the opportunity before and has blown it, largely because of factionalism, exclusivity, and inattention to party machinery. Eisenhower blew one chance in 1952. Nixon blew another after 1968. Reagan was prevailed upon this spring to keep on Republican chairman Bill Brock, the great post-Watergate party-builder, but will Reagan now appoint another base-broadener to succeed Brock, or make the post a sop for the right wing? If the reactionaries make a move to oust Howard Baker from the Senate GOP leadership, will Reagan stop it? I think Reagan will appoint a moderate Cabinet of Nixon-Ford veterans, but will he make a home in the Republican party for the millions who voted Republican for the first time last Tuesday—workers, Catholics, and fallen-away liberals? Arguably the Republicans could become the nation's dominant party simply on the strength of conservative support in the south and west. However, that would be a tenuous GOP majority, and not a very happy one for the country.

Although 1980 seems an unrelieved disaster for the Democrats, it could be the beginning of an opportunity for a comeback, if the Republicans err and if the Democrats use their time out of power wisely. The first choice the Democrats have to make is whether to allow Jimmy Carter's choices to run the Democratic National Committee. If they do, the likelihood is that the rules that produced two Carter nominations will be maintained and party jobs will be filled by veterans of the Carter-Mondale campaign, whose primary interest will be Mondale's nomination in 1984 rather than grassroots rebuilding and fundraising. Mondale deserves a shot at the nomination, but so do other candidates—Gary Hart, Edward Kennedy, Jerry Brown, Joe Biden, Dale Bumpers, Hugh Carey, Bill Bradley, and Jay Rockefeller, to name the most prominent.

The biggest job facing the Democrats, however, is intellectual renewal—the development of means by which the party can retain its traditional compassion for the downtrodden in society without being wedded to categorical aid programs, quotas, government agencies, and interest groups as the vehicles. This is not going to be easy. Under pressure from right-wing Republicans, traditional Democratic interest groups—environmentalists, feminists, blacks, Hispanics, and labor unions—are likely to come running to the remaining Democrats for protection. The danger is that Democrats will be as reflexive in shielding outworn and expensive Great Society programs in the

Next Week:

Reagan's Price Controls

by Robert Lekachman.

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Love and Oil.

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1980s as Republicans were in opposing them in the 1960s. If that happens, electoral defeat is the same predictable result.

The Republican party has scored a dramatic sweep at the presidential level and in the Senate, but it did not capture the House, supposedly the most popularly responsive body of Congress. Nor did the Republicans win a majority of the nation's state legislatures. There is no indication that when pollsters ask voters to identify their party preference, the GOP will suddenly become the nation's majority party. There is a chance for either party to emerge as dominant. But neither has done it yet.

Morton Kondracke

Plagiarize or perish.

Epping

Literary plagiarism is generally thought to be advantageous to the perpetrator only when it goes undetected, but history has proved otherwise. Dickens and his publishers were faced not only with clever imitations of *Pickwick Papers* being sold in the bookshops, but also with a play at the Strand Theatre annoyingly similar to Dickens's work. In response to the publishers' protest, the play's successful producer simply requested them to take an oath that the sales of *Pickwick Papers* had been hurt since the play began its run. But sales happened to be brisk at the time, removing the basis for any legal action, and the matter had to be dropped.

One hundred and forty years later, plagiarism's actual virtues were further suggested by *Passages* author Gail Sheehy. Her indiscreet rifling of UCLA psychiatrist Roger Gould's research resulted in a suit filed by Gould, an out-of-court settlement, and the showering of *Passages* with valuable pre-publication publicity. The size of the settlement, which earned Gould $35,000 before the book ever came out, was still paltry when compared with the cash value of the attention that abetted the book's best-sellerdom.

But it has remained for Jacob Epstein, a 24-year-old novelist, to indicate plagiarism's full commercial potential. Recently, English novelist Martin Amis, son of Kingsley, revealed that Epstein had stolen several passages from Amis's 1973 first novel, *The Rachel Papers*, and stored them in his 1979 first novel, *Wild Oats*. This display of pirated goods dismayed the owner, Amis, who does not regard *The Rachel Papers* as his finest hour and does not appreciate its being quoted even without attribution. But Amis's sense of outrage overcame his sense of shame and, although spurning legal action, he told all in a letter to the *London Observer*. This prompted Epstein to admit to, and apologize for, his thoughtlessness in the same journal, saying, "I do not know any good way to apologize for this, nor the way to explain to you how my respect for your writing became something so lacking in respect."

Epstein does explain it, however. He copied down passages from several admired authors while writing his novel, proceeded to overlook or misplace the attributions, and then neglected to launder the snippets when folding them into his book. The situation was discovered only later, on the eve of publication, when Epstein was rummaging through old notebooks in his closet (one can only hope that Amis appreciates the company Epstein threw him in with—Epstein's other benefactors include Nabokov, Goethe, and Turgenev). His "realization" came too late to purify the first US edition and Epstein claims that his letter alerting the book's English publisher went astray.

The young novelist may "regret what has happened," but as the son of Random House editor-in-chief Jason Epstein and *New York Review of Books* editor Barbara Epstein, he cannot be oblivious to the perquisites of his sin. Jacob Epstein is surely aware that we live in a culture where the vast majority of first novels are read only by *Kirkus Reviews*, the book's editor, the author's loved ones, and the author himself. Under these circumstances, any publicity is good publicity, particularly if the *New York Times*, reporting the story twice within a week, spells your name right. More scrupulous authors have written half a dozen novels without being awarded even a passing reference in the *Times* for their labors. The great lesson about notoriety gleaned from the past decade is that it doesn't matter if you're right or wrong as long as the media knows where to get hold of you.

It's hardly surprising, then, that in the wake of the Epstein affair and its coverage, publicity-starved authors across the country have begun to confess publicly to acts of literary plagiarism. Jacob Epstein has lent his name to this thriving phenomenon—"epping."

As is the case with many innovations, the inventor is quickly outdone by his imitators. In California, an unpublished author told the *Los Angeles Times* that considerable portions of his first novel—which had been yellowing in a desk drawer for three years—were taken word for word from Arthur Schopenhauer's 1891 volume, *The Wisdom of Life*. Undaunted by the prospect of a novel copied extensively from a work of philosophy, 15 New York publishing houses—nine of which had earlier rejected the manuscript—began bidding for the hardcover rights. This was followed quickly by the epping of Fleming Arleutter, a Chicago writer with five out-of-print novels and no following to his credit. He called a press conference at the Palmer House to announce that sections in each of his novels had been lifted *in toto* from sources that include *A Sentimental Education*, *The Tin Drum*, Time-Life's *Recipes From the Cooking of Spain and Portugal*, the US House of Representatives 1973 Subcommittee Hearings on the

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Role of Franchising in Small Business, and an as yet unpublished novel by Joyce Carol Oates. As a result of this startling disclosure, Arleutter's publisher is reissuing his books in an omnibus edition and has signed him to a lucrative contract for two forthcoming novels based closely on Iris Murdoch's oeuvre.

Unfortunately, some instances of epping have been nothing more than fraudulent attempts to garner publicity and communicate publicly with famous authors. For instance, a struggling New York writer of pornographic novels named Ava Michaels admitted before the camera of a local network affiliate that she had cribbed parts of *Hot To The Touch* and *Tex-Mex Sex Kitten* from the works of Louis Auchincloss. Under questioning, however, it came out that Michaels had only stolen several subjunctive clauses and the description of a tax lawyer's bedroom. At this point, Michaels broke down, whimpering, "I'm sorry, I know it's not much, but I was on a tight deadline." A similar case of false epping involved Priscilla Fuente's assertion, imprudently printed by a New Jersey paper, that in her volume *Secrets of Mulching*, she had plagiarized freely from Clifford Irving's biography of Howard Hughes. Reporters who rushed to the library to verify the claim quickly discovered that it was a lie, and consequently her newly released biography of Greta Garbo is still doing poorly in the bookstores.

As a strategy for success, epping hasn't been seized upon only by the obscure; even established authors are looking to Jacob Epstein for a way to improve their image. When best-selling West Coast novelist Julie Schantz admitted that her current blockbuster, *Queen Violet*, is largely copied from her earlier book, *Principles*, her sales zoomed, and she has now assured her readers that her next novel, *Just Like You*, "will resemble *Queen Violet* so closely that no one will be able to tell the difference." And in Vermont this past week, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet James Kinderman found himself prominently in the pages of *People* magazine after confessing that all six of his volumes of lyrical poetry contain lines taken directly from John Kenneth Galbraith's *The New Industrial State*. Asked by *People* if it wasn't next to impossible to work Galbraith's prose into the villanelle form he favors, Kinderman replied wryly, "I'm not a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet for nothing."

Even Norman Mailer, fearing his reputation is flagging, got into the epping act this past week by claiming that his book *Armies of the Night* was partially stolen from Gore Vidal's *1876*. "That's a rare compliment from him," Vidal noted sharply in the press, "but *Armies of the Night* came out in 1969 and I didn't publish *1876* until 1976. Besides, I stole most of *that* from *1984*."

The effects of epping are beginning to be felt in every corner of the literary world, in ways, no doubt, that will change the industry forever. Already several authors have reported that their latest manuscripts have been turned down by their publishers with the explanation, "It's terrific stuff, but we haven't read anything like it before." Book reviewers too have adjusted their literary standards and begun lamenting in print that works under review are "simply not derivative of anyone" or are "depressingly original."

R. D. Rosen

R. D. Rosen is the author of *Pride and Prejudice, To the Finland Station*, and the screenplay for *Guns of Navarone*.

The city that governs least governs least.

Self-Service

Historians interested in the official birth dates of inspired notions should mark April 14, 1980. That was the day Detroit mayor Coleman Young unveiled his Self-Serve City program and gave new meaning to Jimmy Carter's statement four years ago that "government can't do everything." There was a day when city government in Detroit actually provided tangible services for its 1.2 million people—picking up the garbage, protecting its citizens from criminals, putting out fires, and keeping the parks tidy. Now, however, Detroiters are beginning to get a glimmer (perhaps the first real glimmer in urban America) of the era of do-it-yourself government. Young's new marching orders: "It may very well be that for the near future we will have to get used to doing things for our city that we have come to expect our city to do for us." Or, ask not what your city can do for you—it's broke.

The occasion was the mayor's annual budget message to the City Council. Young explained that calamitous recessions, double-digit unemployment (unemployed construction and auto workers are not good producers of tax revenue), and double-digit inflation do not treat city budgets kindly. Grasping for historical precedents, Young reached back to the Panic of 1893 when Hazen Pingree, Detroit's legendary progressive Republican mayor, decided to let the unemployed plant potato patches on city land and on donated private property. The mayor recalled what Pingree said back then: "Until such time as society has learned to do justice to all, we must depend on the methods nearest at hand." Assuring the council members that "American society has changed a great deal since 1893," he added, "If we are to keep Detroit moving, we must rely on what Mayor Pingree called 'the methods nearest at hand.' We still have to rely on ourselves to get the job done."

The mayor then announced his plan to swell the ranks of the Detroit Police Reserve "to ensure that our streets remain safe and secure." He added, "We will come together to clean up our streets and alleys and

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vacant lots this spring and through the year."

Keeping Detroit's streets safe and secure is getting trickier these days, since the mayor has been forced to lay off 1,100 police officers in the last year, a reduction of about 20 percent. The mayor's solution—the police reserve—is made up of citizens between 18 and 50 who, after 80 hours of training in a classroom and on a firing range, holster their guns, put on their uniforms, and serve as amateur cops. They ride as extra hands in scout cars (with two regular cops) and they help control traffic and crowds at special events. Detroiters fervently hope that it is possible to learn how to shoot straight in 80 hours. There are currently 1,350 gun-toting volunteers on the streets. The mayor wants that boosted to 2,000.

The Fire Department Auxiliary, a volunteer outfit disbanded after a brief existence during the civil defense craze of the 1950s, was revived this month. Fire Chief Sam Dixon, the man in charge of community relations, explains the born-again auxiliary this way: "The idea is to train the people in the neighborhoods to protect themselves." The citizen-firefighters won't actually put out fires unless there's a riot, a natural disaster, or an enemy attack, Dixon insists. But they will be trained for the work and outfitted with uniforms left over from the 1950s.

The list of chores in the Self-Serve City is infinite. And now the theme is spreading through the bureaucracy. The *Detroit Free Press*, at the tail end of a recent story about the intricacies of killing rats, passed along this advice from the man in charge of the city's understaffed rat control program: "With city services cut to the bone, now is the time for people to start doing things for themselves." Brothers and sisters, get out the rat poison!

Adopt-a-Park, a program which asks neighborhood groups to pick up litter and cut the grass in the nearest city park, is being promoted as a solution to dwindling numbers of employees in the Recreation Department. Citizens who complain about high weeds in untended vacant lots are being counseled by the mayor to get out their lawnmowers. The law says the city must control weeds on vacant lands, but there are some 25,000 vacant lots in Detroit—and only 23 workers assigned to cut weeds.

No one can deny that there are some pluses to life in the Self-Serve City. Public parks that have been adopted by the local block club suffer less from vandalism and litter than the orphaned parks maintained solely by the city. Also neighbors tend to talk to one another while cleaning up their share of the common space. But in the words of Jimmy Watts, a former UAW organizer who is now the acerbic director of Detroit's Department of Public Works, "Some things people can do. But they can't turn the whole operation around with volunteer work."

For those still in doubt about the efficacy of all this, Mayor Young will ask Detroit's citizens in December to add a new name to their Christmas gift lists—the city of Detroit. The mayor's request will take the form of an odd new gift catalog. "We're trying to compete with Ward's and J. C. Penney's" explains the city public relations staffer who is putting the catalog together. "The only difference is you don't buy the gifts for yourself, you buy them for the community."

What do you give to the city that has nothing? Well, almost anything. Citizens with a little cash can brighten public places by giving their impoverished town a honeysuckle shrub for $15. The more affluent can select from a stunning array of upscale municipal furnishings, such as a picnic table for a neighborhood park ($120) or a swing set ($800). In the Neiman-Marcus category, the ultimate Christmas gift for 1980 will be a combination senior citizens center and regional arts complex that the city can't afford. Only $3.5 million.

Citizens can also contribute directly to the city's operating budget, says the public relations staffer. "Six out of seven neighborhood skating rinks are going to be closed this winter unless we can find an angel that wants to give us $6,000, 'cause that's how much it costs to run one skating rink for 12 weeks."

All this promises to alter the way citizens deal with City Hall. In the old days, under a system known as democracy, if the neighborhood park lacked a picnic table, a citizen could call a favorite City Council member and holler until the rec department installed one. Now citizens can stop yelling and start buying their own picnic tables.

The Detroit Christmas Catalogue is only the most recent in a series of hints, proclamations, and volunteer programs that, taken together, seem to be ushering in the age of the Self-Service City. While searching in vain for the $100 million needed to balance the city budget, Mayor Young has begun to make it clear that he intends to make the residents and businesses of Detroit the public servants of last resort. "Government can't do everything" has turned into code for "government can't do much."

The most disturbing thing about the Self-Serve City is that Detroiters—a plucky bunch who have survived numerous economic catastrophes since the middle of the 19th century—probably will make it work as well as anyone could. Which means the idea could spread like the flu. After all, it has an obvious appeal for politicians: it is the ultimate excuse for bad government (or, in this case, no government).

One day soon, if you're an unhappy hawk peeved over the weakness of America's defenses, you might want to do some volunteer work around the Pentagon. Or flip through the upcoming United States Christmas Gift Catalogue and buy your country an MX missile. And perhaps wealthy liberals and conservatives alike would contribute to the food stamp program.

Kirk Cheyfitz

Kirk Cheyfitz is senior editor of *Monthly Detroit*.

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Ulster: between history and politics.

The Troubles Today

by Jack Beatty

To break the connection with England, the never failing source of all our political evils. . . .

—Wolfe Tone

We had fed the heart on fantasies,
The heart's grown brutal from the fare;
More substance in our enmities
Than in our love. . . .

—W. B. Yeats
"Meditations in Time of Civil War"

Belfast

It is called "the dirty protest." The 350 IRA prisoners making it are "the blanket men"; their aim is to "Smash H Block." In Ireland these phrases possess a magic nimbus. The traveler sees them everywhere. A book entitled *On The Blanket: The H-Block Story* is a nationwide best seller, and "Smash H Block" vies with delightfully diverse speculation about "Who Shot J.R.?" as the country's leading graffito. For an hour on a narrow Irish road, I stared at a scrawl on the back of a trailer-truck which joined these manias in an inevitable act of wit. The memory of it now fills me with hope. "The IRA," it said, "shot J.R."

The dirty protest is being staged at the Maze prison just outside Belfast. In aerial photographs, Maze looks like it has been built by a giant child playing with blocks. The child has bolted the low, prefabricated buildings in place, forming patterns, forming letters. These are the H Blocks. They are unquestionably real, but are best thought of as symbols.

What they stand for is British power in Northern Ireland; to smash H Block is to smash this power. This symbolic logic has been propounded by the IRA to create the idea that the prisoners in the H Block represent the Catholic minority in the North. The suffering of the one is simply an intensification of the suffering of the other. The cause of both, of course, is the hated Brits. Thus far, the IRA has used the H Block issue as propaganda, but lately it has threatened to use H Block as a justification for stepping up its terror campaign in the North and for assassinating more British public figures on the order of its two most celebrated victims, Lord Mountbatten and Airey Neave. In a touching gesture of solidarity with less lustrous Britons, the IRA also promises to place bombs in the London tube. Whether it carries out these threats remains to be seen, but here as elsewhere in Ireland, history is not reassuring. When the H Block issue first arose in 1976, the IRA warned that if its demands were not met it would take reprisals against prison guards. So far, 18 guards have been murdered. One man was killed coming out of his sister's wedding. His three-year-old daughter was beside him when he was shot; according to witnesses, she lay on top of him while he lay bleeding to death on the ground. Think of her white dress slowly blossoming red the next time you see a reference to the IRA. Another man, a pensioner from the prison service, was shot in the Belfast apartment he shared with his wife. Who was also shot. The idea is to make the murder grisly so that it will get on the evening news. In this way the institutions of the open society are used to spread terror.

The dirty protest is over the legal status of the IRA prisoners. They say they are political prisoners and demand to be treated differently from the criminal prisoners at Maze, who are required to wear uniforms and endure other indignities. The British say they are criminals and treat them as such. This is a change. Prior to 1976, the British conferred "special category" status on all IRA prisoners in an effort to bribe their comrades on the outside into good behavior. They abandoned this policy when they discovered that the IRA prisoners were using the relative freedom allowed under special category to run a school for terrorists.

But it is not this argument over classifications and overalls that has stirred up the powerful emotion that engulfs the H Block issue; it is the way the IRA prisoners have carried out their protest. They refuse all prison clothing, wear only blankets, and smear their feces and urine on the walls, floors, and ceilings of their cells. This is the dirty protest, and at the women's prison in Armagh, menstrual blood is added to the mess. An Irish journalist describes one cell: "It was covered in excrement almost to the ceiling and all four walls. In one corner there was a pile of rotting blue molded food and excrement, and the boys had evidently been using bits of foam rubber to add to the decor as we entered."

Although such desperate gestures have precedents in the Irish revolutionary tradition, the dirty protest began by one of those casual expedients that fanaticism can harden into tactics and credulity convert into causes. In September 1976, several months after the British had revoked the special category status for IRA prisoners, a young man named Ciaran Nugent was arrested for stealing a van, tried (by a juryless court), convicted, and remanded to Maze prison. He demanded special category status; the British refused. Defiant, he refused to wear the prison uniform; his privileges were revoked. He tore up his bedding; the bed was removed. The only object remaining in his cell was a chamberpot, and this now became his weapon. He began by throwing his feces out the window; the window was sealed. It was only when the guards tripped over the chamberpot that Nugent hit upon the trumping ploy. "We had to put it somewhere," he told an Irish journalist. So he smeared it on the walls, and the dirty protest was born. Soon it spread to include a cadre of IRA prisoners. Now it is the cardinal issue in the IRA propaganda campaign to get the Brits out of Northern Ireland. Naturally, the propaganda obscures the fact that the men on H Block have chosen their appalling condition. H Block is a worldwide symbol of British oppression, not of the swollen political will of the IRA.

H Block is a pseudoproblem. It can be resolved. Indeed, the British last week gave in on the uniform issue, but some of the prisoners have gone on a hunger strike to force a concession on the category issue, too. The H Block issue has taken so long to solve precisely because

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it is soluble. It has been kept alive to provide psychic relief from the complex problems of the North. These problems are terribly rooted in the Irish past and in its iron grip on the Irish memory.

Irish history extends back to the time of the fabulous personages who stud Yeats's early poetry with unpronounceable names, but the part of it that still shapes the present is the long, painful interval of British rule. Another Irish Protestant writer, Jonathan Swift, wrote a parable which catches the essence of this rule as well as the self-deceit by which the British long were able to look upon brazen plunder as a humanitarian act. Every year, the parable goes, the British would dispatch good men to govern Ireland; but every year, halfway across the Irish Sea, pirates would board their ships and replace them with brigands, who would then land in Ireland and do unspeakable things in the name of the Crown. Undaunted, His Majesty's government would send out more good men the next year and the next, but still the pirates would come. They have been coming for 800 years.

AN ELIZABETHAN apologist for the genocidal campaign then being conducted against the Irish wrote that "they live like beasts, voide of lawe and all good order"; they were "more uncivill, more uncleanly, more barbarous and more brutish in their customs and demeanures, than in any other part of the world that is known." There was only one thing to do with such people and that was to replace them with loyal settlers. In 1609 the English King James proclaimed a land settlement for Ulster in which four-fifths of the six counties were set aside for the exclusive occupancy of English and Scottish settlers; the native Irish were either driven out or forced to live in reservations which they could not leave on pain of death. This is how the Irish province of Ulster came to have a Protestant majority living in anxious domination over an unreconciled Catholic minority. This is how the Troubles began.

From 1609 to the present the story changes, but it always has the same three sides: the English, the native Catholic Irish, and the settler population made up of English and Scotch Methodists and Presbyterians. After the partition of Ireland in 1922, the British recede, leaving Ulster to be governed in its domestic affairs by a parliament which brazen gerrymandering makes into a Protestant club. That leaves the Catholics and the settler Protestants. To this day, they are taught different versions of the past in schools that remain segregated by religion. For the Catholic children, the great days of history are the Catholic days, while for the Protestant children the day of days is July 12, 1690, the day when the good Protestant king, William of Orange, defeated the bad Catholic king, James II, at the Battle of the Boyne, thereby ensuring that Ireland would remain under British rule for the next 250 years. In Northern Ireland, history as it is preserved in memory is a means not of social unity but of social division. Since, moreover, the state supports the Catholic schools as well as the public schools attended by the Protestants, it is not too much to say that, next to welfare, Northern Ireland's chief social investment is prejudice.

A Protestant children's rhyme:

> Sleuter, slaughter, holy water
> Harry the papishes every one
> Drive them under and bate them asunder
> The Protestant boys will carry the drum.

A Catholic children's rhyme:

> On Saint Patrick's day, jolly and gay
> We'll kick every Protestant out of the way
> And if that won't do we'll cut them in two
> And then send them to hell with their red, white and blue.

Protestants say they can spot a Catholic by the color of his eyes, or by his hair—red being an infallible sign of Catholicism. Names also help. Riley is a Protestant name, for example, but O'Reilly marks a Catholic. Each side, writes Anthony Bailey in his excellent *Acts of Union* (Random House), has nicknames for the other. "Catholics are Micks or Taigs. Protestants are, curtly, Prods or Blacks. They start to use these as children, after school, when they encounter children from the other side; sometimes of course the two sides feel bound to fight."

Marriage might bridge the gulf, but in fact intermarriage itself is, in the words of one expert, "probably the single biggest divisive issue in Irish life." The former bishop of a Protestant diocese in the North wrote in last month's *Encounter* that "the pressing problem which faces all Christians in the North is the problem of their relations to their fellow Christians; the problem not only of coexisting peaceably with each other, but of how to prevent inherited beliefs and attitudes from coming into collision." The title of the bishop's article sums up what I have been saying in five words: "It is a religious issue!"

In the face of such deep divisions, it is easy to see why men and women of good will fasten on the substitute issue of H Block. It is wholly in the present; it does not stretch back to King Billy and King James. It is equally easy to see why even a temperate man like Anthony Bailey can give way to the gloomy verdict that "the violence appears to be organic; one will have to produce different people in Northern Ireland in order to do away with it." Fantasy or despair: the visitor to Ireland meets with these polar attitudes again and again.

FROM THE Dublin government there is the fantasy of the "Anglo-Irish dimension." This, they say, will bring an end to the Troubles by putting the queen on the Irish coinage, permitting contraception, and making divorce as common as daisies. These steps taken, the Ulster Protestants will break the connection with England and merge with the Republic of Ireland in a veritable *frisson* of fellowship which will make them forget their primordial fear that to live in a Catholic-dominated state is to let themselves in for Kipling's "Hells Prepared by Rome." From the able political men of the Social Democratic and Labour party, which represents the province's 500,000 Catholics, there is the same Republican fantasy: any internal settlement in the North must look toward union with the South. This stipulation, of course, destroys the chance of an internal settlement, since the Protestants will not agree to share power with Catholic politicians pledged to abolish the present state. From the Sinn Fein, which is the front organization of the IRA, there is the fantasy of a socialistic Ireland which will spring into being as soon as the last British soldier is gone. To prepare for this millennium the Ulster Protestant must, as a Sinn Fein spokesman put it, "be educated." "By bomb?" I asked. "By bomb, if necessary," he answered.

The other side is no more realistic. From the Democratic Unionist party, which orchestrates the grievances of Ulster's 1.5 million Protestants, and which boasts its most popular politician in that redoubtable cleric, Ian Paisley, there is the neo-colonial fantasy of continuing to rule in Ulster without sharing power with the Catholics. As for the British, they make a show of enthu-

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siasm for their new power-sharing plan, but they have been ruling Ulster since 1972, and underneath one suspects that, like the Dublin man I met in Dingle, they wish "the whole bloody place would float out to sea."

The British now are hot for a political solution, but their soldiers—8,000, down from 20,000 seven years ago—are accoutered in flack jackets and armed as if for the D-Day landings, and the only hearts and minds one can imagine them winning would have to belong to members of the National Rifle Association. There have been just under 1,500 civilian deaths during what the British call "the Emergency," and one has to wonder how many of these people were killed by promiscuous firing from soldiers armed with automatic rifles. Nor is it any better with the police. The Royal Ulster Constabulary carry submachine guns with long clips of ammo which probably could be squeezed off in seconds, causing God knows what carnage in the ricochet. The armament—and I have said nothing of the tanks sitting by the country roads or the armored cars and personnel carriers which are as common in Belfast as Volvos in Georgetown—must seem excessive to any visitor. It chills the air. It confronts you with the insensate mechanism of state violence which vastly exceeds the violence of the terrorists in destructive power, if not in deliberate cruelty. And it is brutalizing and intimidating. In the short time I was in Belfast the sights of the guns made me nauseous, faint; made me know the coward in myself and, against my prejudices, left me with a sneaking respect for the IRA.

Politically, it is stupid for the British to display all this weaponry, for it galls the Catholics, whom it is clearly meant to intimidate, while it stiffens the will of the Protestant ultras, who would rather die than compromise. Blunder, bluff, and force—these are old British habits in Ireland, and it is hard to make the case that Britain has changed when five armored cars may go by you in 15 minutes in the center of Belfast. In dealing with the Troubles as a military problem, the British have made the province ungovernable. They have reason to despair.

My idea of the Troubles was formed in the early 1970s by Marcel Ophuls's documentary, *A Sense of Loss*. Its most striking feature is mob violence—sectarian warfare between working-class Protestants and Catholics. This violence is augmented and confused by the presence of the British troops. When they were first called out of their barracks in the summer of 1969, they were seen as the protectors of the Catholic minority, its traditional protector, the IRA, having faded away. (In those days, beneath the "IRA" scrawled on Belfast and Derry walls was written "I Ran Away.") But since Bloody Sunday, January 30, 1972, when British paratroopers shot 13 Catholic demonstrators in Derry, the British (at any rate in our picture of them) have become the scourge of the Catholics, breaking into their homes, shipping them off to internment camps, and driving their young men into the arms of the resurgent IRA. Just about here our picture of the Troubles freezes. Few of us remember the prorogation of the Stormont parliament in 1972 and the advent of direct rule from London. Fewer still retain any memory of the several truces, abortive settlements, and failed governments since then. It has been eight years.

TODAY Northern Ireland is a far less dangerous place than it was eight years ago. In August 1972, for example, there were 460 reported shootings and 136 bombings, whereas in June of this year, the last month for which statistics are available, the figures are 38 and 14. Mobs no longer bash it out in the streets. The violence is now almost exclusively of a military nature. It is the work of the IRA terrorists. Their violence provokes the answering violence of the Protestant terrorists, the police, and the Army.

The steady decline in violence is full of political meaning, and what it chiefly means is that the IRA has lost much of its support in the Catholic ghettos. To use the Maoist analogy, the sea in which these fish hide is receding, leaving them exposed and isolated. Increasingly desperate, the IRA now terrorizes the very people it claims to protect. One measure of this: since the first of the year, there have been 58 IRA knee-cappings. The victims: Catholics. It is the way the IRA deals with potential witnesses. There are also reports of flourishing IRA protection rackets in Belfast and Derry. It is as if the IRA is devouring its own political base. Why? Apparently the American Irish are beginning to see through the IRA propaganda, and the money from America is drying up. Gangsterism is the short-run solution. It could spell long-run disaster.

The British estimate that fewer than 300 terrorists are active in the whole of Ireland; and now a new factor, the Irish Republic, is cracking down on them. It will not be their haven any longer. IRA suspects are routinely tried in British courts with evidence furnished by the Irish police. So, North and South, it has become more dangerous for the terrorists.

The bitterest denunciation of the IRA I heard—"Fascist thugs"—came from a civil servant high in the Dublin government. This man spoke with moral authority, since his father had belonged to the original IRA in the days when it won Ireland's independence. The Provos, he said, with their PLO-supplied weapons, were a disgrace to this proud tradition. On the other hand, I talked to a Dublin man who maintained that the Provos were in fact upholding the tradition. He spoke of them as "the boys," and made jesuitical excuses for the boys who had just killed two Irish policemen. This man asked: "If it was right for the IRA to do what it did in 1919 to 1922, then why was it wrong for doing the same thing in 1980? In the 60 years between, the aim has not changed a bit—to get the British off this island!" He was fiery and articulate, so I feared saying to him then what I say now: that the six counties of Ulster are indeed part of the Irish nation, but belong to England because that is the wish of a majority of their people. By contrast, in 1919 a majority of the people in the South were for independence from England. The 1919 IRA therefore had a democratic basis, whereas the 1980 Provisional IRA is antidemocratic. Terror, not the will of the people, is its God. It is trying to coerce the Protestant majority into changing its mind about the connection with England. It has no chance of succeeding, nor has it any chance of bullying the British into pulling out. Ulster will remain a province in the United Kingdom.

In its propaganda the IRA says that its enemy is the British. It is an effective way to appeal to a venerable moral simplicity among people of Irish blood—that England is the source of all their country's political evils; but the reality is of course much more complicated, politically and morally. To paraphrase Conor Cruise O'Brien, contemporary England is not responsible for the troubles of contemporary Ireland, though the record of historical England is damnably black in this regard. To contemporary Britain, Ulster is an expensive

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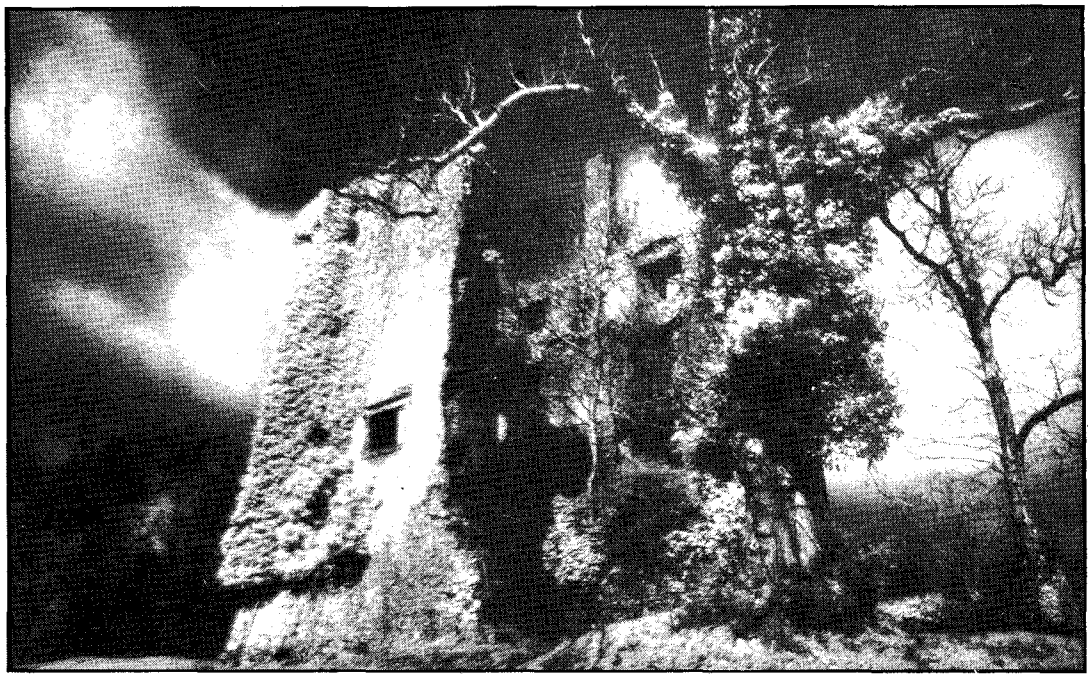

Old Castle Hackett. Built in the 13th century, abandoned in 1705.

photo by Simon Marsden, from *In Ruins*, edited by Duncan McLaren (Knopf; $22.50)

international embarrassment. It would love to sever all connections with the province and be rid of the Irish question forever, but in a ripe irony the Ulster Protestants will not let it off the hook of its own history. In political as opposed to propaganda terms, then, it is the Ulster Protestants who are the real enemy of the IRA. It is important to understand something of the way in which the Irish past has shaped the character of these people, for otherwise it is too easy to write off their moral claims.

In a nation where memory is the major form of mind, the Ulster Protestant is distinguished by his bottomless powers of historical recall. History is a nightmare from which he never wakes. The Irish historian F.S.L. Lyons has defined the psychology of the Ulsterman as a "siege mentality," and has traced its provenance to the Siege of Derry in 1689, when that Protestant city put up a heroic defense against the assault of the Catholic army of King James I. A Catholic army, this time the IRA, was at the gates again when the present Ulster state was born in 1922, and in the 60 years since, the pressure from that quarter has never wholly ceased.

Fearful of the threat from the South, fearful too of the restive Catholic minority—breeding, breeding—within the gates, the Ulster Protestant also lives in warranted fear of being abandoned by his British protectors. Twice in the last century Britain was ready to pull out, and on both occasions the Ulstermen were ready to fight to maintain the Union. In 1885 they were prepared to take up arms against Gladstone's Home Rule bill. They had formed a massive secret army to fight in 1914 when Home Rule again seemed imminent, and were checked just this side of treason only by the outbreak of World War I. And some knowledgeable observers think that if Britain were to pull out of Northern Ireland today, the Ulstermen would engage in a desperate guerrilla war against both the Catholics and the departing British troops.

To grasp why the Ulster Protestants are so impassioned about the Union with England, it isn't necessary to go as far back as the Siege of Derry. It is enough to drive across the border from County Monaghan in the South of Ireland to County Fermanagh in the North and look at the monuments in the town squares commemorating the Ulstermen who have died in all of Britain's modern wars, from the Crimean to the Boer, from the Great War to the war of 1939-45. It was a regiment of Ulstermen that was the first out of the trenches on that horrific opening day of the Somme in 1916, and July 1 is still a day of national mourning in Northern Ireland. The monument outside the Queens University in Belfast is thick with the names of members of the university community who died in places like Tobruk and Burma. While the Republic of Ireland, in a gesture of anti-British neutrality, sat out World War II, Ulster guarded Britain's northern flank, and destroyers based in Belfast and Londonderry and Larne sailed out to meet the convoys from America, preserving Britain's lifeline. It was an inestimable service, and for it Churchill paid Ulster a tribute which any English MP tired of Ulster's high welfare payments should read as a text on the nature of historical obligation:

> We were alone and had to face single-handed the full fury of the German attack, raining down death and destruction on our cities and, still more deadly, seeking to strangle our life by cutting off the entry to our ports of the ships which brought us food and the weapons we so sorely needed. Only one great channel remained open. That channel remained open because loyal Ulster gave us the full use of the Northern Irish ports and waters, and this ensured the free working of the Clyde and the Mersey.

Ulster's loyalty cost it some 5,000 casualties, among them many civilians killed in two punishing air raids on Belfast. But Ulstermen have died in thousands for the British flag whenever Britain needed them; and it is this blood sacrifice which gives their descendants a

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claim on Britain she may ignore only at the price of dishonor. Finally, therefore, the IRA is up against what all those monuments in that little country stand for: a connection with England that has been sealed in blood and witnessed in repeated acts of loyalty. It constitutes a kind of moral gravity, and this is a far stronger force in history than the legalisms and the economics by which shallow intellectuals set such store.

Britain should bear the drain on its treasury and the loss of its sons and stand by Ulster as Ulster once stood by her. But this does not mean that it would be morally indelicate of the British to put pressure on the Protestant politicians to work with their Catholic opposite numbers in setting up a devolved government. The Ulster Protestants have grown used to a position of uncontested domination. But power cannot obscure reality forever, and the Protestants now are faced with a choice. If they want to play the leading role in any devolved government, they will have to accept the full participation of the Catholics in every sphere of its operation. Otherwise, the British will continue the present system of direct rule. It will be hard to give up the old dream of a "Protestant Parliament in a Protestant country," but it is that or nothing for the Reverend Paisley and his followers.

BUT THE Catholics of Ulster also will have to give up a dream. A political settlement is only the first step toward softening the enmities between the Catholic and Protestant working classes, but even it never will be taken unless the Catholics accept the fact that they are an Irish nation in the British state. In other words, they will have to abandon their dreams of uniting with the Irish Republic. As so often in Ulster politics, memory can only be an irritant on this score. For as any Catholic will tell you, the partition of Ireland was intended to be temporary. The border, which meanders through pastures and living rooms all the way from Newry to Donegal, was an expedient the British hit upon to extricate themselves from a nasty guerrilla war in the South without triggering another in the North. The idea was that they would gradually pressure the Ulster Protestants into becoming part of the fledgling Irish Free State. This, at any rate, is what Lloyd George on the one side and Michael Collins on the other envisaged would happen when they signed their names to the Anglo-Irish treaty of 1922. That it did not happen was a great tragedy for the whole Irish people. It was a tragedy for the Protestants because, from 1922 to 1972, it allowed them to exercise a morally dangerous degree of power. This proud people became the masters of a state founded on bigotry, discrimination, and fear. It was a tragedy for the Catholics because it left them stranded in a country in which they were regarded as a kind of fifth column for practicing the faith of their fathers.

But there, a short distance to the south, was the Republic of Ireland, the land of milk and honey and Protestants who knew their place. For 50 years, whenever a Northern Catholic suffered an indignity at the hands of a Protestant, he could retreat into his paradisal fantasy. Then, in the mid-1960s, history played a cruel trick on Northern Catholics. For a brief moment it seemed as if their prayers might be answered as the two states of Ireland began to draw closer together. At home, an indigenous civil rights movement, inspired by the black freedom marchers in America, was winning concessions from the Stormont government—in the shape of fair housing legislation, equal opportunity guarantees, and one-man-one-vote redistricting—unimaginable only a generation before. Pope John XXIII was extending an ecumenical hand to Protestantism, and after centuries of doctrinal antagonism, Catholics and Protestants were rediscovering their common heritage in the body of Christ. But even the hopes raised by Pope John paled beside the well-nigh eschatological expectations roused by the 1965 meeting, in Northern Ireland, of the prime ministers of the two states of Ireland, Sean Lemass of the Republic and Captain Terrence O'Neil of Ulster. This unprecedented event must have seemed a portent to the Northern Catholics. If the leaders of the sundered states could meet, could real union be far behind?

Then it all went smash. Hope rapidly turned to fear as Captain O'Neil's concessions stirred the dormant Protestant working classes into a belated frenzy of reaction. Long excluded from political participation by the club of Anglican squires who had run the country since 1922, the Protestant masses now mobilized behind the defiant rhetoric of Ian Paisley. The first and unhappiest result of this upsurge was the collapse of Captain O'Neil's reform government and its replacement by a ministry less willing to meet the ever growing demands of the Catholics. It was only a question of time before Catholic demonstrators should clash with Protestant counter-demonstrators in the narrow streets of Belfast and Derry.

In retrospect it seems clear that the unpredictable element in this fated chain of events was the recrudescence of the IRA. By the late 1960s the IRA was hardly an army at all; after an earlier terror campaign in the 1950s had failed to win Catholic support, the IRA renounced direct action and adopted instead a Marxist line which called for the peaceful means of indoctrination and education to achieve the unvarying Republican goal. The outbreak of street fighting between mobs of Protestants and Catholics in 1968 caught the IRA unawares. Faced now with a choice either to continue in its seminar phase or to resort to direct action, the organization split into wings favoring both extremes.

DIVIDED, the IRA might have been paralyzed altogether had it not been for the infusion of some £75,000 to the wing favoring the use of force, the so-called Provisionals. This money, which was quickly used to buy weapons, came from the Dublin government under circumstances that remain as mysterious as they are scandalous. For here was a government that had fought the terrorists on its own soil giving them the means to ply their terrorism on the soil of a neighboring country. When the present Dublin government denounces as fascists the terrorists who now kill their policemen, Northern Protestants should not be accused of undue cynicism if they doubt the sincerity with which these denunciations are made. For the current prime minister of the Republic, Charles Haughey, was, as minister of finance in 1969, the very man who approved the clandestine transfer of funds to the Provisional IRA. To be sure, the Dublin government acted under the impulsion of a not unjustified fear that the Catholic minority in the North was about to be destroyed by angry Protestant mobs. No doubt the Dublin government intended that the IRA would act exclusively in its traditional role as the guardian of the Catholic ghettos. They could not have foreseen that the appearance of British troops (called out of their barracks, ironically, to do what the Dublin government hoped the Provos would do—

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protect the beleaguered Catholics), just weeks before the £75,000 was delivered, would give the Provos the chance to go on the offensive and to widen a virtual civil war into an anti-colonial guerrilla war.

What has since happened in the North is that the Provisional IRA has succeeded in putting the issue of breaking the connection with England on the agenda of the Northern Catholic politicians. But what do the Catholic people think? Professor Lyons reports that a poll taken in the late 1960s, before the pot of the Troubles had boiled over, indicated that, while a majority of Catholics were in favor of unification with the South, it was not an issue of great importance to them. It was not then a cause in Ulster politics. The Catholic civil rights groups were demanding equality *within* the British state of Northern Ireland, not the ending of partition. Doubtless feeling among them is very different today. After all, they have been living these past 10 years in what the IRA is pleased to call "a war zone." They have their own siege mentality; in bad times, the Irish Republic is their England, and these past 10 years have been very bad times indeed. But surely it is not beyond the wisdom of the leading Catholic politicians to recognize that a large part of the Republican feeling among their constituents is in the decisive instance a wish for peace and safety and social hope for their children. Peace, security, a normal, happy childhood for their children, equal opportunity and equal rights for themselves—can't the Catholics have these things within a reformed Northern state?

What might such a state look like? Above everything, it would have to be a state the Catholics could respect and in whose political life they could participate. In these features, it would bear little resemblance to the colonial regime that lasted from 1922 to 1972, though it might be the state that Ulster was in the process of becoming when the Protestant reaction and the rise of the IRA plunged it into anarchy. It is certain that this reformed state could not escape from the politics of religion, and for a time Catholics and Protestants would vote as opposing blocs, threatening the state with political paralysis. But it is possible to imagine even this fixed feature of Ulster politics changing under the assault of political ambition. For the 30 percent Catholic minority would loom irresistible to any Protestant politician who wished to challenge the hegemony of Reverend Paisley, the real toad who inevitably would be the first prime minister in this imaginary Ulster garden. A coalition of Protestants and Catholics—a party, say, of the professional and middle classes—might topple Paisley and his party, and perhaps even govern as a coalition. Posit such a situation and it becomes easier to imagine the Catholics coming to identify with the state of Northern Ireland. The troubles have shown that the old state cannot work, not that *no* state can work. Politics can deepen social rifts, but it can heal them too.

THIS FANTASY is perhaps no more credible than the others. But it does differ from them in one respect: it is not a *total* fantasy. It preserves a daunting dose of reality in the shape of Ian Paisley. It preserves the connection with England which, as we have seen, the Ulster Protestant will not suffer to be broken so long as his memory is green. Unlike the die-hard Protestant fantasy, however, it includes the Catholic minority as full political actors, while it puts the Republican dream of the Catholics on the back burner of history, where it belongs. Finally, this legitimate polity I am positing is one in which terrorism has no social soil in which to grow. I assume that the IRA will outrage itself out of business. The IRA had to abandon its earlier terror campaign for lack of support among the Catholics, and many observers think the same thing is happening now. Still, there is one incalculable difference between the early 1960s and now: with the backing of the Terror International based in Libya and South Yemen, terrorism can now survive without an indigenous social base. That the outrage of a purely parasitic terrorism will further polarize the two communities is the gravest threat confronting any reformed state. It will take international action of a concededly unlikely kind—boycotts, quarantines, the ostracizing of the PLO and the minions of Colonel Qaddafi—to contain it. If the United States has any role to play in bringing social peace to Ulster, it lies in leading an international offensive against terrorism.

Aside from this last implausibility, this scenario has roots in social actuality if not yet in any social movement. The immense war weariness in Northern Ireland is making for it. The desire of a religious people to wring meaning from the years of their collective life that will always be known as the Troubles is making for it. The ambition of political men tired of being ruled from London is making for it. The fact that the present British government does not depend for its majority on the votes of Ulster MPs makes for it. The growing evidence of realism about the IRA among the American Irish is making for it. Against these positives must be ranged the negatives of the international recession, which has hit Ireland hard, compounding the social poisons of prejudice with the insecurities that flow from heightened economic competition; and the free market sink-or-swim theology of the Thatcher government, which soon may find sinful the subsidies necessary to get Ulster's promising enterprises—an automobile plant, for example—off the ground. Then, too, there remain the obdurately colonial mentality and manner of the Ulster Protestants, which are not likely to change overnight. There remains the equivocal position of the Irish Republic which on the one hand condemns the terrorists and on the other lends legitimacy to their cause by espousing the same political line: that the connection with England must be broken. But the greatest negative in the current situation is presented by the Catholic politicians of the North, who continue irresponsibly to dangle the dream of joining the Irish Republic before their frightened constituents. It is up to them to break the grip of Ulster's history on its politics by reconciling their people to the necessities of their situation as a minority in a democracy split along religious lines. Until the day when the politics of religion gives way to the politics of class or coalition, the Catholics will lack the social weight of the Protestants. This will be true even in a reformed state. No one can deny that such a disparity will be felt as a deprivation.

The political realm is the sphere of existence in which men can transcend the fate of their history. To enter this realm is to accept the possibility that something new might happen. By refusing to enter it, the Catholic politicians are ensuring that the cycle of futility will continue. They look to the past for security and the past enfolds them like a doom. In Ian Paisley, Ulster has a great demogogue; but what it needs now is a Catholic statesman to transform the desire for peace among his people into the strength necessary to renounce a dream and reclaim an imperfect reality. The moment is ripe; it awaits the man.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Threatened Lives

Eva Le Gallienne was the Peter Pan of my generation. I was taken to see her play it in 1928 at the repertory theater she had founded in New York, and I can remember my excitement. She and I have had a long relationship since then—though I've been somewhat more aware of it than she has been—through such a busy life that when she published a first volume of autobiography entitled *At 33* (1934), it didn't remotely seem presumptuous. All along I've had double feelings about her: thorough admiration for her aims and standards, regret that I couldn't have equal admiration for her performances. From *L'Aiglon* (1934) to the old matriarch in the recent revival of *The Royal Family*, she has been to me an actress who knew precisely what ought to be done but couldn't quite do it. What a pleasure, then—direct, uncompensatory, no end-of-the-road bouquet—to say that her first (substantial) screen appearance in *Resurrection* is completely realized, completely beautiful. Even her face, which always seemed a bit pinched for an actor's "mask," seems to have clarified, the eyes looking out of a retreat that only time can provide.

It's all the more gratifying because Le Gallienne is playing a role quite unlike anything I know in her career, a weathered Kansas farm woman, Grandma Pearl, with crinkled accent and sun-baked voice. The part isn't written with any special depth; the depth comes from Le Gallienne. She said in a 1961 interview that, for her, acting consists first of "wiping the slate clean. Getting rid of 'Me' in order to become the part. This is the antithesis of the Method. . . . If you get yourself out of the way, what is there to be afraid of?" She got herself well out of the way here in this role—this daughter of the poet Richard Le Gallienne who made her stage debut in London (in 1914), who has translated Ibsen and H. C. Andersen and has written a study of Duse. She also got out of the way every stereotypical "Land-sakes-child" grandma performance that she may have seen; she went straight to the woman, to what she knows of such women and their lives. The result is a lovely paradox: a fresh and strong performance of a tired and failing old woman. The scene in which she says goodbye to her departing granddaughter Ellen Burstyn, whom she knows she won't see again, when she holds her granddaughter's hand to her skinny old bosom, is one of those moments when an actor's art transforms a prosy script into a poem.

Roberts Blossom, who was the crotchety old father in *Handle with Care* and the painter-convict in *Escape from Alcatraz*, is an actor whose work in the theater has meant much to me, especially the "Knut Hamsun" protagonist of Dorst's *Ice Age*. In *Resurrection* Blossom has another conventional role, a hardbitten old farmer (Le Gallienne's son), who just doesn't know how to express feelings and has given up regretting it. The farmer has in him a fierce puritanical strain that makes him harsh toward his daughter, and in Blossom's hands this disguising of sexuality turns an unremarkably written role into an O'Neill character. His death scene is the kind of acting that looks easy to those who don't know what it takes to summon up real quiet.

In 1970 Blossom was in the Vivian Beaumont production of Sam Shepard's *Operation Sidewinder*; here Blossom acts with Shepard. The playwright's first film performance was in *Days of Heaven*, as the dying young farmer, and he did the best work in the picture. The script of *Resurrection*, full of conventional roles, gives him one of that lot: the town hellion boozing and wenching it up out of small-town frustration, especially because he comes from religious-zealot parents. But the role does move through an unconventional, logical development. In the terrain both of its start and its finish, Shepard is like a knife: he cuts to the essence. With his lean-wolf looks and persona, he *starts* halfway home in the part, but his talent takes it all the way. He's a born film actor, but since he's also the most talented American playwright practicing at this moment, he may not have time for a full acting career. (He's also a gifted jazz drummer. Poor Shepard.)

Ellen Burstyn plays the leading (and only unusual) role, a simple woman of extraordinary powers. She is in a car crash with her husband; the husband is killed, and Burstyn "dies" for 10 minutes or so. When she returns, she discovers—gradually—that she now has some power to heal the sick. Burstyn, after long stage and screen experience, is maturing into a mature leading woman, with warm talent, actor's intelligence, and a gravity that helps her even in comic roles. But she has one probably insuperable lack, something that was not true of the (roughly) comparable mature Bette Davis: Burstyn has no extra measure, no hint of wildness, no implication that we are *not* seeing all, no capacity for surprise. She has only—a very big only, of course—the ability to certify what we expect.

The director, Daniel Petrie, has been

Films Worth Seeing

Airplane! Just what you'd always wanted to happen in an airplane disaster picture: chaos. Hilarious chaos. Skyhigh jinks.

The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith. A rich and excellently acted Australian film about a half-caste abused into murder, c. 1900. If it fails to reach tragedy, it reaches quite a lot.

Every Man For Himself. Welcome back to the irritating/irreplaceable Jean-Luc Godard, testing once again the boundaries of filmmaking and of narrative. More an aesthetic protest than a film, but it's *alive.*

Kagemusha. A genius returns. Akira Kurosawa's new film about 16th-century Japanese warriors doesn't reach the heights of his *Seven Samurai*, but it's magnificent.

SK

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working in TV and film for over 20 years without much distinction. In cinematic terms the opening sequences of *Resurrection* don't alter that opinion. The beach games in California, the birthday-present of the car by Burstyn to the husband, all the happy-marriage stuff, are patently being laid in to be exploded. The whole beginning has the look of a lot of script-pages plodded through, one day's shooting after another. The "death" special effects, not devised by Petrie, are all right—at any rate, they don't jar with *my* experience of death—and the shooting of the rest of the picture at least becomes "invisible": no strain but no style. Still, everything that's been said above about the acting, as well as unsaid things about other actors, implies some help from Petrie to his cast.

The script by Lewis John Carlino has many stock characters and some stock writing. ("Mighty pretty sunset. Pretty as a picture.") But the subject is out of the ordinary: healing without the invoking of religious faith, healing through empathy and love. The veracity of such healings I'm not going to attempt to comment on: evidently there are instances. What's interesting is that the subject is not faith healing—familiar in fiction and fact film—and that Burstyn runs into trouble with those who blast her for daring to heal the sick without mentioning God's name (especially since her private life is healthily sensual). The conflict then is between one aspect of the evangelism that Richard Hofstadter and other historians have shown as ingrained in American life and a secular "rival." Whether this is a pressing current problem I don't know, but it's a good subject.

The trouble with Carlino's screenplay, structurally, is that he merely picks up the subject by the nape of the neck, examines it, then puts it down again without any resolution in dramatic or thematic terms. The story just quits. Burstyn, after an outbreak of violence against her, meekly goes off and lives alone in a desert filling-station, forsaking her gift. (At the end we see her secretly healing a sick child whom she embraces.) What are we to understand from it all? That a new force in the world is being temporarily denied and must wait its day? That formal religion is being jealously obstructive? That Burstyn is a latter-day Salem witch? That she is some kind of secular messiah and that therefore she is doomed to be ostracized, if not killed? Neither these questions nor any others are answered. It's frustrating.

At least the film tries to deal with an exceptional subject, and the acting is exceptionally fine.

Exceptions may grow rarer. Front-page headline of *Variety*, October 22, 1980: "Average Pic Cost Is Now $10 Mil." The story discloses that the situation is worse than that. The head of MGM recently told a convention of theater owners that, when you add another six million dollars for marketing costs, a picture must now take in $40 million at the box office before—allowing for exhibitors' and distributors' shares—it breaks even for the producers. And that's before a penny of profit.

If these figures are reliable, they mean that our filmgoing future will be composed only of pictures aimed at a $40 million gross. Cheery, eh?

The chief possible hope for the artistic freedom of theatrical film in this country is the means that, one way or another, is used in virtually every other filmmaking country: government subsidy. By now it's taken for granted that the other American performing arts—opera, dance, music, non-Broadway theater—cannot possibly operate unsubsidized. But because it's still possible to make huge fortunes in film, subsidy for film makes no headway. If it were no more possible for a few people to make big bucks in film than in opera or ballet or regional theater, the need for subsidy might be seen more clearly. The still-extant chance for film bonanza may strangle good American film.

Subsidy couldn't guarantee good American film. Grave cultural problems would still cling, and subsidy couldn't completely cure even the financial problems. But at least some kind of tax remission, some kind of post-release award for good film (as in Sweden), would brighten the encircling gloom.

A Specialist in Generalizations

The Winding Passage: Essays and Sociological Journeys 1960-1980 by Daniel Bell

(ABT Books; $25)

Twenty years ago Daniel Bell drew a contrast between the intellectual and the scholar. "The intellectual begins with *his* experience, *his* individual perceptions of the world, *his* privileges and deprivations, and judges the world by these sensibilities." The scholar, on the other hand, "has a bounded field of knowledge, a tradition, and seeks to find his place in it. . . . [He] is less involved with his 'self.'" Bell put forward this distinction in the epilogue to his first collection of essays, *The End of Ideology*, the only place in that book where he actually used the phrase. I almost wrote "offending phrase," for the "end of ideology" became the tag epitomizing all that the radical intellectuals of the 1960s most fiercely set themselves against. Since Bell imputed to intellectuals a special affinity for political ideology, his comparison was widely taken to be an invidious one favoring the objective scholar over the self-preoccupied intellectual. Some years later, when Bell began to write about applied science and technological change, he was stigmatized as an apologist for the "technocrat" rather than the scholar and weirdly seen as the partisan of a social scientific positivism on which he had always cast a skeptical eye consistent with his origins in the literary and political New York intelligentsia of the 1930s and 1940s.

These reactions were completely wide of the mark: even in the 1960 epilogue Bell's definition of the intellectual was obviously in part a self-description and not an apologetic one. In a rare autobiographical aside in the present book, he tells us that as a graduate student in 1938 he shocked a visiting British professor by confidently declaring himself to be a "specialist in generalizations," a characterization he reaffirms half seriously 40 years later. Irving Howe, who certainly ought to know one when he

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sees one, praises Bell as "a true intellectual" on the jacket of the new book. In one essay, Bell returns to the problem of defining the intellectual as a type and complicates and qualifies his earlier dichotomy in a characteristically learned yet incisive survey of the etymological and cultural history of the term in Russia, France, and America since it came into use less than a century ago. This essay closes with a remembrance of the world of the New York Jewish intellectuals that sired him, melancholy in tone because Bell is well aware of the dissolution since the 1960s of that extraordinary community, knowing, as another former "insider" has put it, that "death is now gathering us into a generation." Acknowledging the enormous expansion in the numbers of scientific and professional experts of all sorts, Bell insists that they possess "little vitality" because "in the nature of their activities, they cannot seek the larger moral and prophetic perspectives which intellectuals in the past have striven for."

According to the Greek aphorism revived by Isaiah Berlin, Bell is quintessentially a fox who "knows many things" rather than a hedgehog who "knows one big thing." The metaphor has been a bit overworked of late, but Bell's foxiness is perhaps his most salient trait. An uncharitable soul might accuse him of writing his two major books to prove that *he* at least could bridge the divide between C. P. Snow's "two cultures," displaying his familiarity with physical science in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* and with art and literature in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. Yet the knowledge exhibited in both books is nearly always brought to bear upon his—and our—present political and cultural concerns, the mark of the intellectual according to Bell's own definition. Indeed, Bell is often vulnerable to the charge that, far from maintaining an excessive scholarly or scientific detachment, he overreacts to and reads too much into what turns out to have been a passing historical moment. As Peter Steinfels has put it, Bell "is repeatedly caught announcing that last week's cold snap is the approaching Ice Age."

Perhaps because oversimplified and pejorative versions of the "end of ideology" and "post-industrial society" became so firmly linked to his name, Bell has chosen a fairly innocuous title for his latest book. (I must remember to call my own next essay collection "The Cunning Corridor," which not only echoes T. S. Eliot but conveys a whiff of sexual *double entendre*.) The 17 essays in his new collection include a number that repeat or expand upon the themes of Bell's two major books, several discussions of Jewish identity, and treatments of such disparate subjects as national character, the utopianism of Charles Fourier, Veblen's late technocratic writings, and criticisms of C. Wright Mills and Michael Harrington, both of whom had singled out Bell himself for polemical assault. The review of Harrington is a typically versatile "one-upping" performance, chiding him for ignoring much of the current technical debate on Marxist economics while making confident pronouncements on the subject.

The Winding Passage also contains two absolutely first-rate pieces of social analysis, one on the so-called "new class" and the other on ethnicity. I read both of them in their original places of publication and they are even more impressive on rereading. The fluency and accessibility of Bell's prose often result in his being patronized as an "intellectual journalist" by more ponderous academic writers, a label that entirely misses his originality and grasp of the concrete. The new class essay is subtitled "a muddled concept," indicating Bell's refusal to join the neoconservative writers with whom he is often associated in blaming everything they most dislike in contemporary politics and culture on this supposedly new historical phenomenon. Sometimes they seem to mean by it little more than the sort of people they meet at Manhattan and Georgetown cocktail parties; on other occasions, the new class is defined to include just about all college graduates, or at least those employed in the "public sector." Bell identifies six distinct groups—from top civil servants to moviemakers—that have been included under the rubric and underlines their irreducible heterogeneity. But he does more than this to demolish the concept. All of the groups in question, he notes, are distributed among different large organizations or institutional "situses"—government bureaucracies, business enterprises, universities, hospitals, etc.—which accounts for their manifest lack of social cohesion and community of interest, essential attributes of classes as collective political actors. "The idea of a 'new class,'" he concludes, "cannot be located in social-structural terms; it must be found in cultural attitudes. It is a mentality, not a class."

Those who are persuaded of the existence of a new class—and there are some on the left as well as the more publicized neoconservatives—quite rightly reject the older models of capitalist or bourgeois society that no longer correspond to a changed reality. But the implications of Bell's criticism of the concept, although he does not fully spell them out, suggest that organizations and inter-organizational relations have supplanted classes and class conflicts as the major agencies of social change in the advanced societies. Differences in culture and lifestyle continue, of course, to be strongly associated with social class—although this too, Bell suggests, may be diminishing—but classes are no longer the most significant political actors, as were the aristocracy, the

THE STUDENTS

The students eat something and then watch the news,
a little, then go to sleep. When morning breaks in
they find they have not forgotten all: they recall
the speckle of words on certain pages of
the chapter assigned, a phrase of strange weight
from a chapter that was not assigned, and something
said almost flippantly by a classmate on the Green
which put much of the 18th Century into perspective.
Noticing themselves at the sink they are aware
the hands they wash are the "same" hands
as in high school—though the face is different.
Arriving in the breakfast hall having hardly felt
the transit, they set down their trays on one table;
presently, glance at another corner of the space:
that was where we mostly sat two years ago,
that was where Gerry said what he said
about circles, the concept of, and Leonardo da Vinci.

Mark Halliday

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bourgeoisie, and even the proletariat (though never living up to Marxist expectations) in the past.

The persistence of ethnic loyalties is often invoked, especially by anti-Marxists, to counter claims made for actual or potential class consciousness. To writers like Andrew Greeley and Michael Novak, the recent resurgence of ethnicity is evidence of the strength of "primordial" identities rooted in kinship and community ties in contrast to economic interests shaped by position in the division of labor. Bell sees this as at most a secondary consideration: the "new ethnicity" also reflects an instrumental as well as an affective or expressive interest, at least since the civil rights movement made it advantageous for racial and ethnic minorities to seek political redress for their grievances. Moreover, anti-imperialism or "third worldism" appeals, often in racial and religious terms, to the West's "external proletariat" and has become, with the decline of nationalism and revolutionary socialism in the West, the most vital and passionately asserted ideology throughout the world today. Even ethnic groups in the older nations of the West have stirred from their long political slumber and begun to define themselves as victims of "internal colonialism." Yet as Bell cautions in a "coda" to his original essay, the forces attenuating ethnic attachments—such as high intermarriage rates—are still at work and the changes in the international order and in the politics and social structure of the advanced societies that have revived ethnic assertiveness may very well prove to be transitory.

The discussions of both the new class and ethnicity fit loosely into Bell's general conception of modern society, which has also served him as a framework for his theses about post-industrialism and the cultural contradictions of capitalism. He reiterates this "theory" in a long essay opening the present book: instead of constituting a unitary system cohering around a central institutional principle, modern society contains three disjunctive realms, each governed by its own "axial principle." The techno-economic realm is subject to the logic of efficiency; the dominant consideration for the polity is equality of representation and participation; the culture, especially since the 1960s, gives pride of place to demands for unrestricted hedonistic self-fulfillment. These three principles are not different refractions of some single underlying structure such as the mode of production in the Marxist canon or the value-consensus given primacy by Talcott Parsons's version of functionalism. The realms, in fact, are increasingly at cross-purposes, which is the source of many of our social problems and of our pervasive mood of crisis and disaffection.

Bell is right to reject the model of contemporary society as a tightly integrated system or "totality." Yet his alternative model amounts to no more than a rough sketch. Theory, I daresay, at least the kind that prides itself on deductive and analytical "rigor," is for hedgehogs. Bell's refusal to write at a high level of abstraction is no defect, but his most ambitious formulations remain little more than static points of reference in his thought and fail to grow in density and suggestive richness as a result of his movement between them and the topics they are meant to illuminate. His profuse examples and illustrations are often intriguing in themselves, but they never lose a disjointed *ad hoc* quality. He seems unwilling or unable to sustain the theoretical "moment" of inquiry. One can often quote him against himself. Indeed, he himself frequently responds to critics by pointing to statements in his text that acknowledge what they accuse him of overlooking. An example from his earlier work is his claim, justified in a literal sense, that he had diagnosed in advance the persisting hunger for ideology among young intellectuals that exploded in the 1960s. This and other comparable qualifications of his major arguments do credit to his sense of reality and lack of dogmatism, but he scarcely seems to realize how damaging they are to his original generalizations.

Bell's major example of the disjunction of realms is the contradiction between the disciplined rationality on which the economy depends and the cultural legitimation of unbounded sensual gratification. The latter he sees as the final triumph over the repressive bourgeois outlook that for more than a century was the major target of the "adversary culture" of avant-garde art and thought. The quoted phrase is, of course, Lionel Trilling's, as is the view, also adopted by Bell, that the counterculture of the 1960s represented "modernism in the streets" with the acting out of impulses and fantasies replacing their sublimation through artistic creation. This perspective is obviously very much that of a New York intellectual for whom the *Partisan Review* of the

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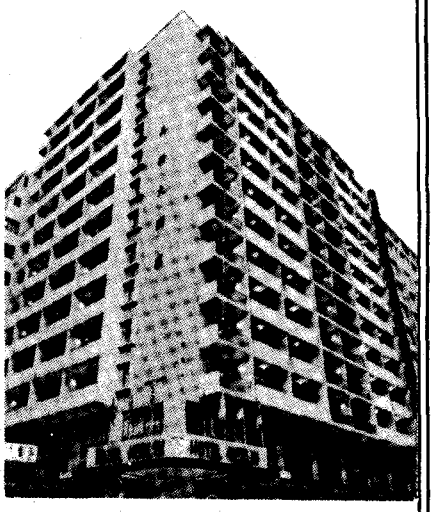

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1940s was a *de facto* graduate school. Bell's survey in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, extended in several essays in the present book, of the links between the visions of the great modernist writers and thinkers and the "pornotopian" culture that has recently achieved mass popularity reads as if he were documenting Saul Bellow's observation that "the dreams of nineteenth-century poets polluted the psychic atmosphere of the great boroughs and suburbs of New York."

Bell is also truly an intellectual out of the 1940s in his uneasiness over the connection between instinctual liberation and attraction to violence. He has not forgotten that between the wars many of the most famous avant-garde writers were drawn to fascism, which fed on currents of black romanticism, the thrill of the demonic, and the *frisson* of contact with the tabooed realms of cruelty and death. Such currents were unmistakably present in the modish cultural creations of the 1960s despite their left-wing ambience, such as Godard's movies *La Chinoise* and *Weekend*, of which Bell remarks that "a corrupt romanticism was covering some dreadful drive to murder." C. Wright Mills's complaint that by the "end of ideology" Bell meant only his own disillusionment with socialism was at most only part of the truth: the phrase was also meant to cover the discrediting of fascism after its defeat in World War II (and later of McCarthyism as well), something that scarcely needed emphasis in 1960 but which deserves notice today with the reappearance under left-wing auspices of a sensibility once associated with fascism. I actually recall none other than Mills assuring me in 1948 that the Chandler-Bogart movie *The Big Sleep* revealed a trend toward the "legitimation of violence" and was therefore the portent of a nascent American fascism. Mills died in 1962, but what would he have made of *Bonnie and Clyde*?

Bell's views on culture are interesting and often persuasive to one who attended the same *de facto* academy (and, for that matter, the same *de jure* one in Columbia). But his angle of vision is a highly special and partial one and it is impossible not to think that he overestimates the broad social impact of modernism in general and its nihilist strain in particular. Without doing too much violence to their attitudes, one can describe most of the great modernist writers as anti-bourgeois, but many of them were far from being defenders of instinct against the claims of reason and morality. What of Kafka, Eliot, Mann, to name only three of the greatest? More recently, Norman O. Brown, whom Bell discusses as a "postmodernist" in *The Winding Passage*, is indubitably an extreme irrationalist, but Bell to me seems to over-stress the dark side of Brown's vision, perhaps only because 20 years ago I myself fell under the spell of that strange and potent book, *Life Against Death*.

The question of causal responsibility is more important. The trends that disturb Bell are obviously identical with what Christopher Lasch has called the "culture of narcissism." One recalls that Bell and Lasch were both invited to Camp David to confer with President Carter at the time of his publicized withdrawal in the spring of 1979 to reflect on the nation's problems. For Lasch, however, the mindless hedonism of the culture has been fostered by the therapeutic professions rather than resulting, as for Bell, from the mass diffusion of adulterated versions of the values of the old avant-garde. Lasch's message might be rendered as "let's get the shrinks off our backs." He regards the "helping professions," ultimately, as agents of corporate capitalism engaged in undermining the independence of the individual, which is not very convincing unless one clings to the Marxist conviction that everything in our society is necessarily a manifestation of capitalism and serves its alleged needs.

Bell, on the other hand, has been criticized for blaming modernism rather than the capitalist mass consumption economy that commercializes all desires, however perverse and subversive of traditional restraints. Although he had occasionally noted this in his earlier book, he now lays much greater stress on it, asserting that "although the new legitimations derive from what had once been an adversary culture, the engine of modern capitalism has taken over these cultural styles and translated them into marketable commodities." The culture proposed, as it were, but the market disposed. He concludes that "in the end, this is the cultural contradiction of capitalism: having lost its original justifications, capitalism has taken over the legitimations of an anti-bourgeois culture to maintain the continuity of its own economic institutions."

But the contradiction, then, is *within* capitalism (though not the one the Marxists harp on) rather than *between* capitalism and the culture, as the theory of disjunctive realms would have it. Moreover, it was foreseen by Weber and Sombart early in the century before modernism had even become fully visible as a distinctive tendency. Weber's famous reference to "specialists without vision, sensualists without heart" was an anticipation of the erosion, especially in the United States, of the bourgeois Protestant ethic under conditions in which "victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs the support of the spirit of religious asceticism no longer." Whether the mechanical foundations are industrial or post-industrial in Bell's sense is not really a crucial consideration. Indeed "post-industrial" seems nugatory, for the visionaries of industrialism as far back as Saint-Simon foresaw that increasingly it would substitute trained mental skills for physical labor as machines approached automatic operation ever more closely.

Weber did not suggest that the purblind specialist and the philistine sensualist could not live together, nor even that they might not peacefully coexist within the breast of the same individual. Bell contends that

> the business corporation wants an individual to work hard, pursue a career, accept delayed gratification . . . and yet, in its products and in advertisements, the corporation promotes pleasure, instant joy, relaxing and letting go. One is to be 'straight' by day and a 'swinger' by night.

The opportunism and triviality may inspire disgust, but is this necessarily a contradiction threatening us with an ominous social instability? Cannot someone work hard all day at the office or laboratory and attend an orgy in the evening without any sense of incongruity? More than a few people today do just that. Then there is Japan, a most successful capitalist country where asceticism never prevailed. (Someone has said that "but not in Japan" is the only verified socio-historical law!) The end of puritanism and our "liberation" from bourgeois repression have produced disappointing results far from

Coming:

Quentin Anderson

on Walt Whitman.

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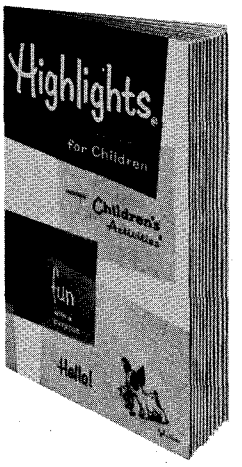

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the exalted hopes and expectations of both the artistic visionaries and the more prosaic therapists and sexual reformers, as well as producing tawdry and dehumanizing effects of their own. Bell and Lasch are right to point this out. If they frequently strike a note of *Gestern war es doch besser*, this hardly makes them potential recruits to the Reverend Falwell's Moral Majority. Yet both of them express a sense of crisis that often seems excessive.

Weber's pessimism about the future was based on his fears that a materially affluent bureaucratic society would prove to be an "iron cage," stagnating in a state of "mechanized petrifaction" devoid of the "highest spiritual and cultural values." After two world wars, Auschwitz, and Stalinism, Bell's forebodings are more catastrophic: he is closer to Bellow's Mr. Sammler who, 'having seen the world collapse once . . . , entertained the possibility it might collapse twice." Bell does not, however, always sufficiently separate his fears of collapse from his negative judgments of the quality of contemporary culture.

In the past Bell occasionally has suggested that we need a revival of religion to revitalize modern life. The closing essay in *The Winding Passage*, entitled "The Return of the Sacred?," explores this theme much more deeply than before with all of Bell's customary erudition. Bell has been accused of favoring religion as social cement, as a bulwark against anomie, even as a support for the status quo, although he never has been properly classified either as a specialized professional sociologist or as a neoconservative. (He is, as we have seen, a generalist intellectual of the old school and politically a skeptical social democrat.) While he often has stressed the socially restraining and unifying bonds of religion, he moves beyond such sociological reductionism in the present essay, locating the role of "civil religion" within a much larger frame.

Religion, in his view, need not involve supernatural belief; it is a mythic and ritualized response to "the existential predicaments which are the *ricorsi* of human culture." Bell would certainly agree that nostalgia for religion is a far cry from the real thing: "Religions, unlike technologies or social policies," he remarks, "cannot be manufactured or designed." I lack the space to do justice to the richness of his discussion and shall confine myself to quoting one of his final observations:

> When there are few rituals to mark the turns in the wheel of life, if all events become the same with no ceremony to mark the distinctions—when one marries in ordinary dress, or receives a degree without a robe, or buries one's dead without the tearing of cloth—then life becomes grey on grey, and none of the splashiness of the phosphorescent pop art can hide that greyness when the morning breaks.

Bell may here be (as Berlin said of Tolstoy) a fox trying to imitate a hedgehog, but I worry about the sensibility—or should it be the soul?—of a reader who remains unmoved by such a statement.

Dennis H. Wrong

Dennis H. Wrong is professor of sociology at NYU and an editor of *Dissent*. His most recent book is *Power: Its Forms, Bases and Uses* (Harper & Row).

South African Witness

Towards the Mountain by Alan Paton

(Scribner's; $16.95)

I have met Alan Paton only once, and we were probably together no more than an hour. But his personality, indeed his person, is one of the most memorable etchings in a gallery which now, at my present age of 67, and after a full life, has become almost unbearably overcrowded. To begin with, he appeared one of those men in whom character has taken over from age. At moments, as he talked, he might have been hardly 30, at others nearing 70; he was, in fact, as I now know, in his late 50s. But the mixture of inflexible will, charm, high principles that seemed at moments to verge upon the prim, and an easy acceptance of human faults and follies was there all the time, whether the man who was talking to me recalled my young South African cousins who farmed "up country" or my old uncles who were revered old pillars of the business community in Durban. For we shared, in part at any rate, the same heritage. He was wholly and I was half of British South African stock—and from that most British of all parts of South Africa, the State of Natal, whose largest town Durban is the greatest African port on the Indian Ocean. What makes his book so illuminating, so direct, so graphic, and so continuous in its line was present in the man I met in January 1961.

As the bright sunlight played on and off the stoep of his beautiful home near Kloof in Natal, where he gave me afternoon tea, he appeared to me now as a young idealist reformer with more than a touch of the left-wing parson, and now as a tired but quite inflexible political fighter who knew all the guiles and shabbinesses that he had to meet. But whatever the shifts of light and shade, there was always this dominant feeling of a man who had traveled a journey, who had experienced fame and success as much as oppression and checkmate, but who knew where he was going. A man who'd made his life, yet also a man who'd made it out of what had come to him rather than what he had willed. The young man who eagerly awaited the unexpected was extraordinarily mixed with the old man who'd met the unexpected and molded it into the shape of a triumphant life. One would have said he was a man who'd known his destiny, if it had not been that a shy, eager youth looked out all the time to see where he was.

This is exactly the story we find in *Towards the Mountain*, the story of a boy in love with life, despite his limited and at times oppressive home, moving through the conventional worlds of British South African school and college and school again as a teacher, yet making of them an experience that would prepare him for the exceptional and the extraordinary. Already in his somewhat forbidding Christadelphian home and in the various rather provincial Natal schools and colleges, we see him not only meeting what every young man must—sex, love, discipline, religious doubts—but also, almost incidentally, separating himself from the usual run, as an English South African in its most British area sympathizing with

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Afrikaner aspirations, accepting a guilt that his fellow British South Africans refused for the effects of the Boer War on the defeated Afrikaners. And we see him less consciously but firmly defying all white South Africans (Afrikaner perhaps more than British) by his natural ease with blacks and coloreds and Indians.

Then suddenly he is given his chance to show his character in the most susceptible area of race relations in the whole land. He becomes principal of the recently founded reformatory for black and colored young offenders. To believe in reform at all is hardly consonant with the strict Afrikaner Calvinist creed (preserved, along with so much else, from a remote Holland that no longer exists); punishment is the answer to wrongdoing. To concern oneself with the reformation of blacks is for all but the most enlightened Afrikaners a racial folly. As to the British South African, there lingered (and lingers, I think) enough of a British snobbery, now almost dead in England itself, which regards the blacks as the servant class, at best a topic of kindly banter, at worst (and young black convicts are surely worst) something to be banished from one's thoughts. At Diepkloof reformatory Paton's will was hardened and shaped, but never made tyrannical. He combined high principles with humor, absolute determination with constant self-examination, discipline and decency of living for the inmates with a constant sharing of the immense love of life itself, which is what I think has probably supported him in his remarkable career. He had to shed some of his hopes. The Afrikaners about whom he felt British guilt proved to be his narrowest foes in his new concern for interracial tolerance and even respect. Although he never lost his deep love for the beautiful land of Natal, he had to shed his provincialism. And he was forced to admit that his romantic love for England (a land he had then visited only once) was irrelevant to his future life as a South African. I believe this step to be more important than he suggests, for even now I have South African cousins who speak of England, which they surely will never visit, as "home"—more than 30 years after all political ties have been cut. What is most striking about Paton's extraordinary and painful inner conversion is that while it was going on he was transforming a cruel, evil-smelling prison into a decent, orderly reform school.

One looks for, expects, a little spiritual pride, even priggishness, in such an account. But Paton's tale is full of humor, not least when he is describing his own failings. His account of how he wrote an obscenity on the lavatory wall about a peculiarly difficult subordinate and, when confronted, did *not* own up to it is a delight. I think the governorship of Diepkloof is the best section of a good book.

In all this work he was supported by the absolute loyalty of a somewhat

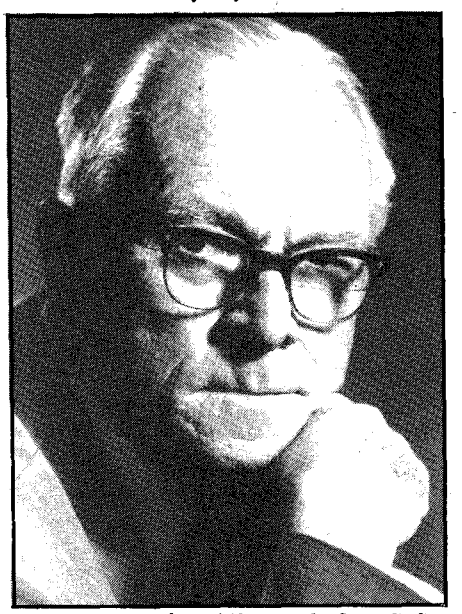

photo of Alan Paton by Crown Studios

uncomprehending older wife, whom I remember as enormously gracious and, by British snobbish standards, his social superior, someone more like the *memsahib* of a colonel in the British Indian Raj.

It is notable, however, that it was when he was separated from his family and from his prison work that his creative gift was liberated in him. In 1946 he was sent on a tour of inspection of reformatories in England and Sweden and the United States. And in the hotel bedrooms of his travels he wrote *Cry the Beloved Country*, which, with acclamation in the USA, a movie, and a play, made him world famous and rich almost overnight. At the same moment a new and more extreme Afrikaner nationalist government was elected in South Africa. Destiny had closed in on him. He left the reformatory for a cultivated, traveled, spacious life. But his zeal for decent relations grew, as first the Malan and then the Verwoerd governments narrowed their passionately held racial purity doctrines in their government of South Africa. There was bound to be a clash, and it came soon. When I went to his house to interview him for a series of articles on the two white races of South Africa (Afrikaner and British) that I was writing for the London *Sunday Telegraph*, he was without passport, a confined, watched man, with the whole world laid open to him that he could not visit, the elegant home his money had bought him made into an elegant prison.

I remember that I thought how easily my own life might have been his and wondered if I would have had his guts. My mother was from Durban, Natal. We visited there from my eighth to my 12th year and there was much discussion as to whether we should stay. If we had done so, I should have had to face all his problems. I know from my childhood experience that I should have had a phase, at any rate, when I wanted to identify with Afrikaner resentment of British rule, although, like Paton, I had only British roots. For we had one Afrikaner in my family—a delightful, easy, blonde, tennis-playing aunt who failed to teach me to swim; and I can remember my anger even in those days when my family treated her (a Boer as they called her) with patronage, mimicking her little Afrikaans exclamations of "Aach!" and "Poof!" as though in their minds she was somewhere a little down the racial ladder, though far above, of course, the "coolies," as we called the Indian settlers or the colored (mixed race) people of the Cape, themselves rather resentfully admitted to a rung well above the blacks, whom the whites still called "kaffirs." Yes, I should have shared Paton's youthful championship of the Afrikaners against the British snobbery. And come to fear Afrikanerdom just as he did. It was an Afrikaner

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relative who, during my 1961 visit, turned to me suddenly in the midst of a happy recall of boyhood days over a good lobster meal, and, his eyes blazing, shouted at me, "They're not like us, you know. They're animals. They never kiss." We had agreed, during the visit, since I was writing on the white races, to say nothing about the vexatious question. But it was too much for his Afrikaner apartheid feeling. I would soon be gone. He must let me know about the blacks. It would be hard to go on remembering the British bad behavior to the defeated Boers (and it wasn't all that bad) after much talk like this.

But I'm afraid my Natal background would not have trained me for Paton's struggle. His world was a narrow Christadelphian one, the world of schools. Mine was, in the main, the world of business, of yachting, of racehorse-owning, and of poker parties. When I made that last visit, on the very day I saw Paton, I was given a family party at nearby Kloof—50 or so relatives round the pool of a cousin's estate, barbecue and all. A cousin took me up to my surviving uncle, aged 90, and said, "Here's cousin Angus. He's come here to write about the difference between the British and the Afrikaners." My uncle, long baked in the tropical sun, blinked like an old tortoise, and said: "Don't write anything that's bad for trade, boy." It was the voice of British South Africa, not the racial, serious voice of the Afrikaner. When I told them that a car was coming to take me to Alan Paton's house, there was a strange mixture of consternation and envy. Consternation, especially among the women of the family, that I might mix them up in politics and trouble with the police, and dangerous revolutionaries or silly intellectuals who encouraged the blacks in bad ideas. Concern among the men as to quite where I was leading them in my visit. The women advised me not to go. But four of my male relatives separately led me aside and said, "Give my regards to Alan Paton. He's a brave man." Considering the extreme right-wing views they had expressed to me during my visit, I was puzzled by this and asked one of my cousins, who had been born in England and whom I therefore felt closer to, what it meant. "Oh, they're just hedging their bets," he said. "After all, there may be a revolution one of these days and then Paton would be the man to know." I think, in fact, this was too easy an answer. My cousins feared the effect of Paton's racial teaching as much as any of the white community (all but a handful, that is); but also, like a vast number of British white South Africans, they wished devoutly and quite hopelessly that they could share his dream, put an end to the Afrikaner apartheid nightmare—so long, that is, as racial change should not alter their position as the group that enjoys all the benefits.

Angus Wilson

Angus Wilson's most recent novel is *Setting the World on Fire* (Viking).

In the Right Kind of Trouble

American Dreams: Lost & Found by Studs Terkel

(Pantheon; $14.95)

For those Americans who grew up in the Depression years of the 1930s, one of the most economical pastimes was storytelling. The elders did the talking and the young did the listening. The tales conveyed "how it had been" over in the trenches in France, and "what it was like" back on the farm before the Rural Electrification Administration brought in the electricity. If you hung around the front porch instead of listening to Fred Allen on the radio, you could learn "how it felt" to be the first person to take a ride in a biplane piloted by one of the barnstormers who made the county fair circuit in the 1920s.

If you were 15, or 10, or seven, the front-porch stories seemed uniformly wondrous. They stimulated that special sense of possibility that has always imparted a bit of magic to life in the American heartland. In those days, of course, everybody took it for granted that their part of America, whether it was Vermont or Iowa or Oregon, *was* the American heartland.

What sticks in the mind two generations later is the marvelously naive confidence of the storytellers. Looking back, one encounters a kind of empowered provincialism, a mode of discourse legitimized by family status or age and armed against critical evaluation by the sheer innocence of the youthful audience.

"Those folks over there weren't fighting," said the man next door:

> They didn't even know how to fight! When we got there, they was raising chickens! They had trenches so deep and so big they had hen houses in 'em. Glory, no American was going to live like that, sittin' around in a hole with chickens! We just went to work and ended the war. Pronto. Fight. That's how you end wars.

The coins of historical causation were not a part of the national currency. It was not that the man next door consciously suppressed the relevant facts: that by the time the American army was in force and in place in France—in July 1918—the last great German attack in the West had shattered against the Anglo-French lines, leaving the Kaiser's armies exhausted. Such wisdom was simply not a part of the culture of our sundry American heartland. Despite smug claims to the contrary, an easy understanding of "the big picture" never has been a notable national talent. Rather better than old-time storytellers could easily imagine, we now know more both about how it was in 1918 and about how people thought it was.

All of which is considerably more than we know about how things were in the farmhouses in the colonial backwoods of 1775 or in the slave cabins near Shiloh in 1862. The now-buried insights and innocences of the American people can only be guessed at. The specifics of the matter are hidden within the popular silence that confronts the modern historian: no one was around to ask the great mass of ordinary Americans what they thought during all those generations when history was happening to them.

Historians do the best they can to fill the lacunae, but they know, a bit better than most of their readers, how shaky the evidential foundation is that underlies their work. Committed to the calling of chronicling "the growth of Amer-

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ican democracy," but bereft of information about what most of the population thought, historians are forced to give voice to inherited political orthodoxies of the left and the right, the better to provide some kind of narrative glue to a mosaic that can be imagined only vaguely. Our historians are better than front-porch storytellers, but probably not much better.

For this reason, Studs Terkel is destined to enjoy an even higher reputation in the next century than he does now. His books will be quoted again and again, because they are full of what historians want most: primary sources. To answer those recurring questions about what we were, what we are, and what we wanted to be, the scholars of the future necessarily will turn to Terkel's books because the American people are in them.

Armed with a tape recorder, but what is more important, armed with the gifts of the mature investigative journalist, Terkel has traipsed up and down the land, finding the Americans, deftly probing beyond their surface friendliness to their deeper longings and anxieties, always alert for the telltale contradiction that, when isolated, could be pursued to a deeper level of revelation. His earthiness—one wants to say his Americanness—gives him the credibility that alone makes such dark explorations possible. Terkel's people are housewives, mechanics, farmers, business executives, professional football players, exploited starlets and beauty contest winners, shop foremen and production workers, leftists and klansmen. From a great deal of indirect evidence, one gathers that they all are willing to remove their masks and talk seriously to him because they feel he will understand the reasonableness of their laments and even their tragedies.

American Dreams: Lost and Found is Terkel's most ambitious book. Not confined by space, as *Division Street* was, or by time, as *Hard Times* was, his song of America ranges over the land and over the generations—a bit of ragtime banjo here, an Appalachian lute there, a countercultural guitar here and there, the low moan of the blues providing the essential rhythm.

Through it all, Studs Terkel, the maestro as questioner, appears unseen: his book is all answers and no questions and thus his style of investigation can only be inferred from the visible result. For all but the most fussy, this should be enough. What distinguishes Terkel from his thousands of "oral history" imitators in both journalism and the academy is his grace and surefootedness. Surely these qualities must have been the stock-in-trade of the medieval minstrels who carried songs and political wisdom from village to village, or the cobblers who carried a hammer and political wisdom through pre-industrial Europe. The practitioners of these trades tended to have a radical streak about them and Terkel fits easily into this tradition, too. He is a technological balladeer whose cassettes give voice to a thousand longings but whose book arranges them to sound a national alarm: we have fooled ourselves for generations, perhaps centuries, but we are groping toward awareness; some of us are mad as hell, and all of us are, at the very least, possessors of a fragile new skepticism. Something cherished is missing, or was never there, and people are beginning to suspect it.

THIS IS WHAT *American Dreams: Lost and Found* is all about.

There is the corporation executive who forsook his family and even his own inner life to devote full attention to climbing the ladder to "success" and who now, in retirement, toys with the idea of wondering where his life went. He settles instead for this:

> I think our nation has grown old, and very rapidly. We've lost a lot of the dream. We're like people my age, whose world narrows. A young man comes out of school and he's interested in everything. He gets a job, and his world narrows a bit. He marries. Job, home and family. And it narrows a bit more. Finally, he gets older. Through with his job, his family gone away, his ultimate concern is his bowel movement every morning. Our country is going through a great deal of that now.

Then there is the man in a blue-collar section of town who calls his community "middle working class." He, too, is old, and he says:

> I feel lonely. I am afraid. I don't see hope when I look at people. . . . What disillusioned me is man's tremendous capacity to be selfish. He is so unwilling to compromise. He refuses to give, you understand? I do not see a bright American dream. It is a dream without lustre. . . . My sons tell me I'm too soft for this world any more. And I tell 'em: 'Thank God.'

Terkel's people are not selected to be "representative." The famous are present, too. Joan Crawford comes across as artificial, dull, and sad, while the Philadelphia Eagles' defensive end, Claude Humphrey, appears forthright, a touch violent, and likable. There are Jewish intellectuals who zap America, and Jewish intellectuals who zap Jews and intellectuals; radicals full of apocalypse and righteousness and radicals pausing in subtle reflection; patriots who worry about the young and who tout B-1 bombers; and a leavening of hustlers, cultural and political, who obviously don't really believe in, or worry about, much at all beyond themselves.

Some of Terkel's people, like folk singer Rosalie Sorrells, are at once predictable and real:

> Boise hardly exists for me any more. All the things I remember have been torn down and been replaced by bullshit. . . . Boise is a corruption of "le bois." Trees. It used to be like a little cup of trees. A river runs right through the middle. You could hardly see more than two or three buildings. The statehouse and Hotel Boise. Just trees so old and big they came together and made little corridors. It was against the law to shoot squirrels. They've cut down the trees. It's a real consumer town. . . . Downtown Boise, all covered, like a cattle chute for customers. . . . What I remember with any pleasure is gone.

American Dreams flows this way—from small town to metropolis, from Hollywood to the Philadelphia Eagles.

What is Terkel telling us? I think something like this: we are a decent people, our past long mystified, our present long diminished by the fraudulent wisps of Horatio Alger. During all the eras when we thought we understood our national destiny, we were complacent and arrogant. Now we are not sure anymore. For many generations, we took our private defeats privately, silently, having been taught that defeat was un-American. Each person learned to blame himself, a dark but somehow patriotic conclusion that was borne uneasily and not well. In the greatest country in the world, one necessarily upheld the national myth even in times of private anguish. No other mode of proceeding seemed available.

It was not a very serviceable way to spend one's years, but it was very American. Pragmatically, evasively, the culture cooperated by focusing upon those things that seemed vibrant and youthful. The lonely but hip American crowd, devoid of gray-haired participants and social honesty.

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Now, in our time, there is a great clanging of shifting gears, a disjointed rumbling suggesting the presence of a short-circuit somewhere in the plant. Fingers point in numerous directions. One senses that every corner of the place will come under inspection. It will take a while to happen.

A thin but persistent strain of radical optimism suffuses *American Dreams*. We are in trouble, but it is the right kind of trouble for, at long last, we are trying to discover the purpose as well as the motion of our lives. Still confined within the narrow alleys of romanticism, we are looking earnestly for a corner to turn. For Terkel, a man rooted in the American people, this is a cause for hope. The seeds of imaginative new beginnings and renewed disasters carpet Terkel's America with diverse possibilities. The land is bloody and strewn with smashed dreams but, for the first time, the land is also rent by the strains that accompany the rites of passage beyond adolescence. Our "happy" morning is over and we are going to learn, now, what we are.

America Dreams: Lost and Found is a stunning book about us, at this moment, by the man who has become our most authentic populist minstrel. He is the modern embodiment of an old, misunderstood, and defeated American tradition and we may not, therefore, grasp the implications of his book immediately. But if Studs Terkel's sense of things is right, we are, as a people, about to try.

Lawrence Goodwyn

Lawrence Goodwyn teaches history at Duke University and is the author of *Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America* (Oxford University Press).

The Art of Being Brief

Packages
by Richard Stern

(Coward, McCann & Geoghegan; $10.95)

For years I have been certain that William Carlos Williams's story, "The Use of Force," must for compactness be the very best very short story in the English language, but Richard Stern's story, "Dr. Cahn's Visit," may be its equal. It appears now as the last of 11 stories in Stern's new collection. I had read it several years ago but had forgotten the details while remembering well the impact it had made upon me.

I had not remembered how very short it was (six pages), how compact, how concise. How can it have hit me hard with such a short blow? It seems almost too spare to have succeeded.

"How far is it now, George?"

Thus it begins. The line stands alone, stark. Dr. Cahn, I soon learn, is addressing not his son George, who has been dead for many years, but his son Will, who is riding with him in a New York taxicab to visit his mother—Dr. Cahn's wife—in the hospital where she is dying. By the end of the third line Stern has established the doctor's cloudiness: "Mother's not well?" Dr. Cahn asks.

His son replies: "No, she's not well. Liss and I took her to the hospital a couple of weeks ago." To this Dr. Cahn replies with a morsel of understatement defining not only the condition of his mind in this moment of his life but asserting his whole mortal forgetfulness, his tragedy now, at 91: "It must have slipped my mind."

How much has slipped his mind? Of course, a great deal. His whole life has slipped his mind. A moment later he says, "I'm sure you did the right thing. Is it a good hospital?" And Will drily responds: "Very good. You were on staff there half a century."

Much has occurred in a few lines. For Stern, a few strokes tell a tale, make a scene, establish a tone, define a relationship. By the time Will and his father have entered the hospital elevator Dr. Cahn has again forgotten that his wife is ill, that she is the reason for their being here in the hospital where he worked for 50 years but which he cannot now remember. Past and present are equally dim. Once inside his wife's room, however, things become momentarily clear: "Now he came in, looked at the bed, realized where he was and who was there."

Not for long. For the doctor the mental end has come. His wife and son "both saw him grow vague and tired." Father and son depart and enter another taxicab, where Dr. Cahn seeks at the end, as he sought at the beginning, information from Will to orient him in space and time. "Are we home?" Will replies as before, "Almost."

Without notice the ultimate moment has come and gone. Dr. Cahn and his wife, after 60 years of marriage, have embraced for the last time, set eyes

photo of Richard Stern by Layle Silbert

upon one another for the last time. The moment is without ceremony, unobserved, uncelebrated by the dying wife or the muddled husband. This must have been the source of the story's effect upon me—my realization that something has happened to two people unaware. Nor does Stern spell it out. Never. It sometimes happens in Stern, however, that a wordless formulation in one story is articulated somewhere else, where it exists as a marginal note, an aside. In "Wissler Remembers" the teacher at the center of the story sounds the note of finality Dr. Cahn might have sounded had he been clearer. Wissler is thinking of his students:

> Though I will see some of you again, will write many of you letters of recommendation . . . may even, God knows, teach your children . . . may, some day, in Tulsa or West Hartford, see you when your present beauty is long gone; *I know that what counts for us is over . . . what counts is gone.* [Italics added.]

Now mother is dead, but that is in

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another story—the title story, "Packages"—whose people we seem to have met before; and yet not quite. They are transformed to serve this story, not merely lifted from another, for each story proclaims its own conditions, and Stern always respects the demand of fiction to serve itself before it serves his own private needs or memories. Thus, not until I re-read the story twice did I detect its link to "Dr. Cahn's Visit."

It begins:

> As I was staying in Aliber's place across from Campbell's my sister asked me to pick up the package. . . . Our mother had died five days before. Campbell's is a wonderful funeral factory. It does it all for you . . . works out the funeral; or, as in Mother's case, the cremation. . . .

This told, I seem to forget the package—mother's ashes—passed to her son: the package "which held what was left of what had once held me." I hear now of mother's past and father's eccentricities until, at the end, in the most startling manner, the package reappears.

I will not reveal the progress of the package except to say that here, typically, Stern's rejection of sentimentality is artful and natural. He is always above it, and this has been so since the beginning of his now-lengthening career. He is a rigorous monitor of his own aesthetic, morally true to it as to an inviolable code, although he has seen as well as anyone that sentimentality is the golden stuff of American media.

Stern's short stories are short. His novels and reportage have always been concise, compressed. Economy of language is his rule. Because of this economy, I think, he has not been read easily. This is the more regrettable since, if the task of reading him requires a greater concentration than we are accustomed to apply to mere jewels of literary art, the reward of reading him is proportionately greater as well. I am sure that Stern is aware of his own "difficulty." He exists in nature, so available to himself in abundant writings so cheerfully given to the world that the temptation to corruption must cross his mind in the spirit of the temptation to try out for the Chicago White Sox. In a story called "Dying," published elsewhere in 1964, Stern wrote of the surprise of a 24-year-old man to discover this chasm in nature between fine writing and the popular mind.

The young man is Professor Bly. His field is plant physiology but he is distracted by poetry. One day he receives a request from a businessman, one Dre-

Political Drawings by Vint Lawrence

A show of recent political drawings by Vint Lawrence, including many that originally appeared in The New Republic, will be at the Barbara Fiedler Gallery, 1621 Twenty-First Street NW, Washington, DC, through November 26. A book of 75 Lawrence political drawings from 1971 through 1980, with an introduction by Henry Fairlie, is available for $10 through the Fiedler Gallery.

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ben, to write a poem memorializing Dreben's mother, who soon will die. Bly is contemptuous of this proposal, but Dreben pursues him, and Bly eventually decides to try his hand at it: his reward, after all, will be $250 ("Just a short poem, Professor. Maybe four lines. Rhymed." "Rhymed'll cost you two-fifty."), enough for "a hot little week or two up on the Michigan Dunes" with his new friend, Phyllis, "a a splendid alteration in his life."

And so Bly tries to write for Mr. Dreben. But the poem he composes is patronizing, beneath himself. And Mr. Dreben has his instincts, too, detecting in the poem something not right. He rejects it. Yet the idea of selling himself seemed so simple, so easy! Why not dish up a little sentimentality for a more or less worthy cause?

I have met Stern six or eight times these 20 years, and we have corresponded. Thus for me an additional dimension of these stories is the magical and harmonious way in which Stern reconciles moments I know to be "real" with moments of fiction. Stern often works, it appears to me, from character and anecdote. He has known somebody, or heard of somebody, to whom a certain thing has happened. He has heard, let us say, of a certain man who has been beaten up by a woman. Or he has known, let us say, a certain woman living through the disintegration of her family. One of these women I recognize as someone I once met in Stern's company. Now, in a short space, he seems to have told me all her life, vivified her, guessed, in James's phrase, "the unseen from the seen," taken an ell from an inch, traced the implication of things. Her character has become clear to me, her way of dealing with her difficulties, of managing, of coping. (I happen to know, for example, that Stern's father was a dentist, not a physician, and my private knowledge gratifies and amuses me when I notice that Marcus Firetuck's father, in "Mail," is a dentist who "said he remembered every mouth he ever worked on." I observe, however, that Stern's craft requires distance, and I am not surprised that Marcus Firetuck's dentist-father exists as an allusion only, perishing in five lines.)

These stories appear to be told with ease. Yet I recall hearing from Stern once or twice how hard the writing was coming, how doubtful he was about everything he was doing, but how he intended, nevertheless, to see it through. It is his life. In "Wissler Remembers" and to a significant extent in other stories in this volume, Stern draws clearly upon his long association with the University of Chicago, to which he once "affectionately and gratefully" dedicated a book. It was not a romantic act but a hard recognition of the university's support. Stern, too, is notable for the support he offers. He has been a memorable teacher to hundreds of students of literature and of writing, and he has earnestly aided and encouraged fellow-writers everywhere in the United States. In Chicago his best-known companion is his colleague and confidential friend, Saul Bellow, who in his trials and afflictions and creative crises has been able to depend upon Stern for the most generous counsel. In physique Stern is large, in temperament open and hopeful: his disposition is accurately captured, it seems to me, in the fine smiling photograph by Layle Silbert which beautifies this book.

Mark Harris

Mark Harris's most recent novel is *It Looked Like For Ever* (McGraw-Hill). He is a visiting professor of English at Arizona State University.

Why Keep Your Husband?

My Story
by Ingrid Bergman and Alan Burgess

(Delacorte; $14.95)

Swanson on Swanson
by Gloria Swanson

(Random House; $15.95)

To survive as a leading actress, the critic James Agate once wrote, a woman must have the beauty of an orchid and the constitution of an ox. These autobiographies certainly bear out the second half of his observation, if not the first (Ingrid Bergman's early detractors described her as a "big healthy Swedish cow"; Gloria Swanson describes herself as "a little shrimp with a turned-up nose and horse teeth and a mole on her chin"). Though both actresses have had almost as much grief as the characters they portrayed, they are as formidable as two tanks, Ingrid at 65 acting and raising money for charity, Gloria at 81 painting, sculpting, and designing a UN first-day cover "containing the themes of birth and hope and peace and fertility in the age of space."

Ingrid Bergman started her career in 1933 with a flying leap and hasn't slowed down since. When the judges at the Royal Dramatic School of Stockholm saw her jump out from the wings and grin at them, they didn't wait for her to open her mouth before voting her in. A few months later, the 18-year-old student was offered a contract with Swedish Films at the astronomical figure of $7.50 a day. She told the enraged director of the school to stuff it (very politely), and swept off to become a star.

In Hollywood six years later, Bergman remade her great Swedish success, *Intermezzo*, and provided grateful studio publicists with reams of copy about the modest, unassuming, all-natural movie star. (This gimmick was not quite the "apocalyptic vision" Mr. Burgess has it. Several years before, Bette Davis had steadfastly refused to let the Hollywood glamorizers mess with her face and her name. Of course, with Davis, "natural" was not quite the same as "healthy.")

As the Palmolive-glowing heroine who gave Humphrey Bogart back his ideals, married Claude Rains for the sake of her country, radiated chaste Catholic adoration at Bing Crosby, and found Gregory Peck's mind and saved it, Bergman prospered throughout the 1940s until the American public, in one of its ludicrous fits of morality, immolated her for having an affair with Roberto Rossellini. Bergman was so moved by the films *Paisan* and *Open City* that she wrote to their director, saying

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that if he could use an actress who knew no more Italian than "ti amo," she wanted to make a film with him. Famous first words.

At some point between the chapters (Bergman is, in these days of lick-suck-thrust autobiographies, impressively discreet), this admiration was transformed into passionate love, and Bergman not only left her doctor husband and small daughter, but bore Rossellini's son out of wedlock several months later. In those days, before Vanessa Redgrave's and Liv ("I Am Serious") Ullmann's babies appeared, to oohs and aahs, on the wrong side of the blanket, Bergman was denounced in the press and deluged with hate mail. A US senator called her unnatural and mentally abnormal, proposed the "licensing of actresses [sic], producers, and films," and claimed that, as an "alien guilty of turpitude," she could no longer set foot on American soil. The standard explanation for this hoo-ha is that Bergman was associated in the public mind with cleanliness and purity, and the ticket-buyers felt cheated when life did not imitate art. But the actress who had played a governess, a healer, and a nun had also played a tart, a party girl, and "a New Orleans bitch." Go figure.

After seven years in the wilderness of Italian neo-realist movies, Bergman was, of course, allowed to come back, triumphantly, in *Anastasia*, playing the part of a woman who may or may not be what she seems. By then, however, her second marriage had evaporated as well. Rossellini takes his leave in a fashion more existential than neo-realist, and with overtones of a Carol Burnett version of *Casablanca*: "The following day Roberto packed his suitcases in the Raphael Hotel and I went to the railway station to see him off. I don't know why he took a train. I remember his suitcases were full of spaghetti."

Half of the alternating sections that make up this autobiography are told in Ingrid Bergman's voice, half in Alan Burgess's. This is a rather cunning way to have one's cake and eat it too: the first-person voice authenticates the memories and thoughts; the third-person sections allow Burgess to step forward and extol the virtues of his modest, unassuming subject, like the host of an extremely long presentation of *This Is Your Life*. Sometimes he falls into the temptation to be profound ("Ingrid knew that Roberto was obsessed by man and the adventure which is life"), and he has a weakness for bad

drawing of Gloria Swanson and Ingrid Bergman by David Schorr

metaphors ("The golden oil of Italy and the pure, sparkling snow-water of Sweden resolutely refused to mix "), but for the most part (I assume he rewrote the first-person bits), he has done a first-rate job of presenting Ingrid Bergman as the same radiant, maternal, selfless creature we love on the screen. The life mask slips only a couple of times, when, after receiving Maxwell Anderson's play *Joan of Arc*, Bergman decides, "To me, there was not enough of Joan and far too much of this political thing, but I thought I could work on Maxwell and sort that out later"; and when, landing in Rome, she remarks, "There were so many people at the airport you'd think it was a queen arriving, instead of just me."

Absorbing as Ingrid Bergman's story is, however, it pales next to that of Gloria Swanson, who lay on the ground to be pawed by a lion for Cecil B. DeMille; jumped into 60 feet of ocean at night for another director, though she couldn't swim a stroke; and nearly died of blood poisoning after having an abortion to save her career. ("Even if Sid Grauman built me an Arch of Triumph in California as colossal as the one in Paris, it would always have a tomb under it, the tomb of an unborn baby who had picked Henri and me for parents and who was now dead.")

Swanson's life story sags a bit at the end—her experiences designing cloche hats and banning female-hormone injections for chickens are not in a class with Joseph P. Kennedy striding into her hotel room and pulling off her kimono ("He was like a roped horse, rough, arduous, racing to be free"). But her tales are often richer and stranger than any the Hollywood scriptwriters toiled to produce for her. When she suggested to them that a movie be made about her attempted abduction by the ex-president of Cuba, she was told "nobody would swallow anything as far-fetched as that."

Of course, the similarity between Swanson's off- and on-screen lives may have resulted from her conscious decision to ape the latter. Her parties, love affairs, and trips to Paris to empty the couturiers' salons are predictable enough, but when the star of *Why Change Your Husband?* suggests to her handsome, alcoholic lover that he wed the silent star Blanche Sweet, who will

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keep him sober until Swanson can get her divorce and marry him herself, we are in an area of life-art confusion that would take Oscar Wilde and 12 Oriental philosophers to unmuddle.

Swanson never did marry the lover she had put on hold (although he dutifully married Blanche Sweet), but she more than made up for that by taking six other husbands. Unfortunately, she could not cure herself of her bad habit of marrying men she scarcely knew, among them another alcoholic, a playboy, a blackmailer, and Wallace Beery, whose wedding-night technique was not a model of tenderness and understanding ("I had only managed to be brutalized in pitch-blackness by a man who whispered filth in my ear while he ripped me almost in two"). She was luckier with Henri de la Falaise de la Coudraye, who made her a marquise, and who seems to have been a decent, if penniless, fellow. Henri had difficulty finding a good job until Joe Kennedy, the Irish mustang, offered him the directorship of the Pathe studios in Paris, several thousand convenient miles away. Swanson records that she was grateful for the opportunity this gave Henri to make good money and become his own man. We can fill in the rest of her emotions at the time, with the exception of the reason behind her infatuation with Kennedy *père*, who sounds like a slob, a thug, and several other one-syllable words, none of them nearly so nice as horse.

Swanson married most of her husbands—including the rapist, the blackmailer, and the alcoholic—out of a desire for security. Sixty years after she failed to achieve this with Wallace Beery, she married her present husband, William Dufty, because he was the first man to tell her "I want to take care of you." And Ingrid Bergman grasped at her second and third husbands to get out of her first and second unhappy marriages—in effect, saying, "You'll have to do the thinking for both of us." What is this craving for protection and surrender that afflicts attractive, intelligent, high-salaried women no less than others? Whatever it is, let's breed it out of the race.

Rhoda Koenig

Rhoda Koenig is a senior editor at *New York* magazine.

Coming:

Theodore Draper on the Memoir of an American Ex-Communist.

Brief Reviews

Going to Extremes by Joe McGinniss

(Knopf; $12.95)

In *Going to Extremes* Joe McGinniss has set out to record "the last days of the last frontier America would ever have." And he has succeeded well in capturing an Alaska on the verge of selling its soul to big oil. For, as McGinniss amply demonstrates, North Slope oil is transforming this state from a poor yet lovely backwater into a rich yet squalid stepchild of the oil companies.

The smell of oil is everywhere. Alaska's biggest city, Anchorage, a place where a collision between a pickup truck and a bear still can cause a traffic jam, has become a boom town, "nervous and greedy, afraid that the music would stop." In rival Fairbanks, two-bedroom apartments are going for $700 a month. On Prudhoe Bay, where the oil is pumped out from below the permafrost, ARCO workers from the Lower 48 make do with $2,000 a week and vacations in Hawaii or Paris. Eskimo workers, their native culture in ruins, stay on the job a few weeks, skip town to get roaring drunk for a few weeks, then come back to work, maybe. To the south, at the port of Valdez, where the oil begins its journey to the outside, the winner of the "oily T-shirt contest" turns out to be a hooker from Seattle on a business trip; having won the contest, she can raises her prices considerably.

McGinniss's Alaska has the frenetic push and shove of Gold Rush California. Drink is a curse and salvation. People come and go at a rapid pace, hoping for a fresh start, a new grab at the main chance. Some come looking for a simpler way of life; more often they are merely after black gold: "Alaska was not part of their dream. . . . It was just like Saudi Arabia . . . a place under which oil happened to be."

McGinniss is not the outdoorsman or naturalist that John McPhee is. So his account of his two years in Alaska is slighter on the sights and sounds that graced McPhee's *Coming into the Country*. He is a better recorder of people and dialogue than of arctic wilderness. Nor is McGinniss, best known for *The Selling of the President, 1968*, a meticulous and elegant wordsmith in the McPhee manner. But he is a first-rate reporter whose stories graphically convey the culture shock wracking present-day Alaska.

Alaskans can marvel at the beauty of Mount McKinley, "a big defensive tackle of a mountain," or the uncharted Brooks Range, "as isolated as the surface of Mars," yet be haunted by the knowledge that none of it is safe from depredation. "The trap was," McGinniss writes, "first you fell in love with Alaska; then you had to work for the enemy—for the pipeline, for the oil companies, for the forces that were destroying what you loved—just to be able to remain."

When McGinniss and four companions trek through the Brooks Range, they are awed by the splendor. "It's like seeing the world in its youth!" one of the party exclaims. Joe McGinniss sees with the unjaded eyes of relative youth, but he's been around a while too. If we want to keep the glory we've got, his book suggests, the price may be steeper than we're willing to pay.

Dan Cryer

Dan Cryer is book critic at *Newsday*.

Hearts by Hilma Wolitzer

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $10.95)

Hilma Wolitzer has published two previous novels, *Ending* and *In the Flesh*. She is also the author of several books for "young adults," and in her splendid new novel, *Hearts*, she fuses the two genres. *Hearts* deals with a cross-country journey taken by Linda Reismann, 26, and Robin, her 13-year-old stepdaughter. Robin is the more world-weary and jaded of the two; Linda is an innocent abroad. After her husband, Wright, dies, she packs her few belongings, her secretive stepdaughter, and Wright's ashes in a Maverick. Linda had been married for a mere six weeks; she and

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Robin are virtual strangers, and strangers who dislike each other.

Things change. *Hearts* is episodic, a series of encounters. The women take leave of their previous friends and, maverick-like, wander west. Linda's first intention is to deliver Robin to her grandparents' home in Iowa; Robin's first is to kill her own runaway mother. Yet the family in Iowa has no welcome for them; the effusive greeting of Robin's mother fails to pacify her daughter or persuade her to remain. So they get back on the road. Wolitzer's ear is flawless; her dialogue has perfect pitch. Robin is a thoroughly convincing figure, an adolescent who calls Linda an "asshole" but envies how well she can dance. Incidental characters—a boy in a swimming pool, a man playing pinball, a tour guide for the Hidden River Caverns—are rendered with precision. Wolitzer's description of the American dream has a kindly bite:

> A contestant on the quiz program had to decide if she was going to risk an accumulation of prizes valued at over three thousand dollars for the possible win of a brand-new Cadillac Coupe de Ville. 'Oh, wow,' she kept saying, and the emcee moved the microphone under her chin each time she said it. The audience was screaming as if the studio were on fire and they were all trapped inside.

Trapped inside the Maverick, Linda and Robin are at cross-purposes. In one hilarious scene, they vow not to speak to each other or to be the first to break silence. While eating in a Howard Johnson's, they are mistaken by a neighborly couple for mutes:

> Of course the couple insisted on paying for everyone. 'It's a pleasure!' the woman shouted. Her voice had doubled in volume since they sat down together. 'And a privilege!' her husband added. 'We don't often get to have lunch with such charming young ladies.' They both shook hands with Linda and Robin. Linda felt hers being pressed fiercely. Courage, was the message, *courage*.

Some of the episodes are darker. Linda's love affair with a charming hitchhiker founders when he learns that she is carrying her husband's child. Robin hides her marijuana, a knife, and a festering tattoo; Linda hides an abortion attempt. When they settle on a place to bury Wright's ashes, it is a rite of passage for them both. The book is, in the best way, sentimental. As they near California, Linda, the anxious driver, feels her feet dance on the car pedals.

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And Robin's eyes come "alive with tears." This is a comedy about the heart-wrenching process of growth; it is written with great skill and no condescension. Few readers will fail to be moved.

Nicholas Delbanco

Nicholas Delbanco's most recent novel, *Stillness* (Morrow), completes his Sherbrooke trilogy. He is at work on a nonfiction book titled *Group Portrait: Conrad, Crane, Ford, James & Wells*.

The New Celibacy by Gabrielle Brown

(McGraw-Hill; $9.95)

During the past libertine decade or so, with multiple orgasms detonating on the American scene like rockets, those who felt somewhat left out of the action might have welcomed the premise of Gabrielle Brown's book, *The New Celibacy*, that increasing numbers of people are abstaining from sex and enjoying it.

Brown cites, among other evidence, a group discussion on the "David Susskind Show," a report in the *Village Voice* that Mick Jagger and Andy Warhol have "come out" as celibates (in Warhol's case, this is hardly news), and a television program about disco dancers who prefer to sleep alone. Her respondents, five men, five women, and three couples, hardly constitute a mass movement.

The new celibacy is characterized in near-evangelical terms:

> By eliminating sex from daily experience, the body can become open to other physiological ways to expend the conserved energy, which include mental and emotional changes, experienced as greater vitality, more mental clarity and focusing ability, more refined perception, more profound feelings of love.

Brown describes her subjects as "successful, positive, strong . . . happy and remarkably healthy-looking," but one woman, who said she visualized sex activity as a leak in her energy pipe, brought home to mind the cuckoo character in *Dr. Strangelove*, intent on conserving his vital fluid. She added, "If you stop the drip, you get a continuous even flow of energy without diverting it into a wasteful stream. For this reason, I don't masturbate, because my energy feels too precious to me." This same woman claimed a weight loss of 40 pounds in the first six months of celibacy, a disclosure which, if word gets out, could lead to a female sexual strike on a scale unprecedented since *Lysistrata*.

Brown devotes considerable space to a discussion of the ways in which celibacy, practiced correctly, can lead the individual from "lower to higher pleasures" and promote creativity. She cites Balzac, Tolstoy, and Thoreau as examples of men whose art flourished best when they were free of sexual desire. It's true that sexual energy may be thus transformed, but a good case may be made for the other side. Consider D.H. Lawrence, Lord Byron, or Ben Franklin, a celebrated trio of creative fornicators.

The book concludes with a do-it-yourself kit for would-be celibates who are advised to put aside lewd thoughts, lay off spicy food, and, if all else fails, "squat over a basin of cool water while moving up and down slowly, immersing the genitals."

Unfortunately, this kind of silliness detracts from some of the interesting points which Brown has to make. She observes that impotence is increasing among young men anxious about their ability to satisfy the demands of newly assertive women and notes that women, interpreting one aspect of liberation as the freedom to engage in unbounded sexual activity, have found indiscriminate sex to be meaningless.

There doubtless are innumerable single people who are celibate, not for transcendent spiritual reasons, but because sexual intimacy with strangers is false intimacy and the continual search for a good relationship over a period of time grows wearying. Given a choice, they would prefer a loving, sexual relationship with a partner. To elevate celibacy to a desirable state makes a virtue out of necessity.

Sylvia Rabiner

Sylvia Rabiner is a New York writer.

Correspondence, *from page 7*

percent membership, and it was through the platform that the Kennedy forces gained much of what they wanted.

The latter part of the article consists of a relentless attack upon the professionalism and integrity of NEA members and, indeed, all teachers. Chapman implies that pure self-interest is the only motivating force for political positions that teachers adopt, and uses the NEA support for bilingual education, opposition to tuition tax credits, and support for small class sizes as examples supporting his contention.

This attack is completely wrongheaded. There is a far better reason to support bilingual education than simply because it provides more teaching positions. What bilingual education does primarily is provide a greater chance of success for that growing minority of students for whom English is not a first language.

The castigation by Chapman of teachers' opposition to tuition tax credits and support of smaller classes is even more curious. What will tuition tax credits do? In essence they will make it easier for middle-class families to send their children to private schools, where one of the chief benefits is certainly small class sizes.

Given the undeniable fact that private schools simply have too few spaces to provide for a significant percentage of elementary and high school students, it is logical and educationally sound for teachers, and everyone else who is serious about improving education in the country, to support smaller class sizes in the public schools. It is there that the vast majority of American children will be educated no matter what happens with regard to the tuition tax credit issue.

Robert F. Hyland
Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall School
Waltham, Massachusetts

Corrections:

Due to an editorial change in Stephen Oates's review of *Abraham Lincoln and the Union* by Oscar and Lilian Handlin (*TNR*, October 25, page 44) Lincoln was credited with advocating universal manhood suffrage in his last speech on April 11, 1865, which he did not do. As Mr. Oates originally wrote, Lincoln "granted in public that the black man deserved the right to vote."

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The photograph appearing in the review of *The Adolescent Diaries of Karen Horney* (*TNR*, November 8, page 32) is from the book, and should have been identified as "Karen in medical school."

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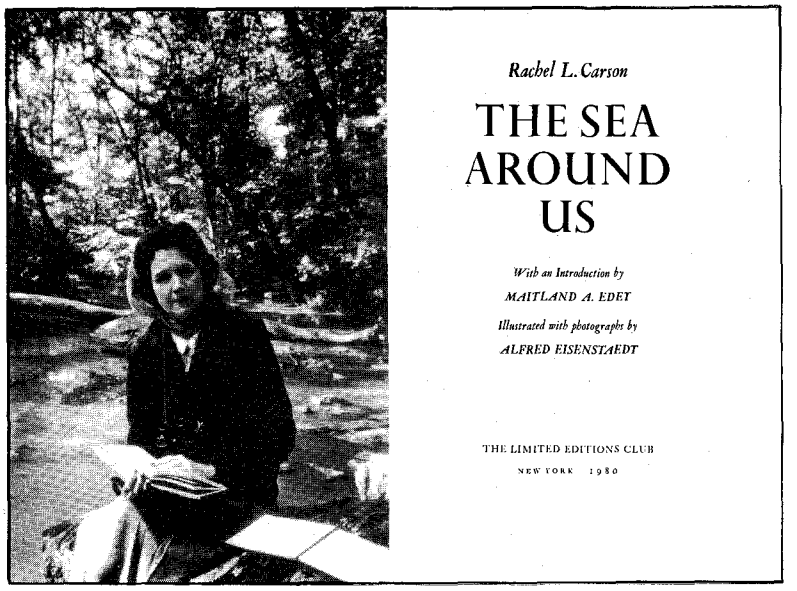

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Washington Diarist

Reston for President

Occasionally I've thought about trying to write a Washington novel featuring a distinguished columnist who produces all his columns long before the events they purport to analyze, but who operates at such a lofty level of generality that nobody ever notices. Naturally, such a person is completely a creation of my own and bears no relation to etc., etc., living or dead. So I was indignant to find James Reston, the distinguished columnist for the *New York Times*, of all people, living or dead, putting my idea into practice.

Reston's technique can be observed by comparing his column in the City Edition of the November 5 *Times* with the same column in the Late City edition. The early edition quite evidently was written without the benefit of any election results, the later one after Reagan's landslide was known. Comparing the differences is amusing enough, but what's really impressive is how little Reston had to change. The first version is called, daringly, "The Morning After," and begins as follows:

> WASHINGTON, Nov. 4—After the celebrations come the hangovers. It would be pleasant to think that everybody would now close ranks and get on with the nation's business. The sad thing about this election, however, is that it has not clarified the nation's problems but deepened them; not unified the people but divided them.
>
> At the Presidential level, it was too personal and negative. Despite the long months of fierce campaigning, it has not produced any general agreement about the policies that should guide the American people through the early 1980s.
>
> Instead, it has left the winners with no clear mandate, and the losers without much public regret. And it has left our allies and adversaries with profound doubts about the future of American leadership.

The revised version is called "Reagan's Startling Victory," and a few quick brush strokes are all it takes to suggest that Reston's brooding was precipitated by the news of Reagan's triumph. "After the celebrations over Ronald Reagan's spectacular victory, come the hangovers. It would be pleasant . . ." and so on. The disappointing failure of everyone to agree amiably about everything now comes despite not only "long months of fierce campaigning," but also "Governor Reagan's sweep of the major states." The landslide result might have embarrassed a lesser pundit out of his assertion that the winner has "no clear mandate," but Reston easily fixes this by amending it to read that Reagan "has no clear policy mandate." The loser, now specified as Jimmy Carter, still is reported to be "without much public regret."

The *sans*-information version contains the cunning observation that, "We will in any case now have a one-term president, without fear that he will try for another." In Round II, Reston happily fills in the specifics: "We will have a one-term President, without fear that Reagan, at his age, will try for a second term." Both the pre-result and post-result versions see the result as mandating "a reappraisal of American political life." Both report "considerable anxiety" about "the loss of national purpose." Reston says impishly in the prefab version, "It will take some time even to think about all this," and he even more impishly retains it in the rewrite.

The pre-facts version states: "One thing is clear and has been dramatized in the election campaign." In the rewrite, that one thing is only "fairly clear," even though by then it "has been dramatized by the Reagan victory." And what is that one increasingly blurry thing? It is: "None of these problems can be resolved in ideological, personal, or partisan terms." Animal, vegetable, or mineral terms? What terms will Reston accept? The early version is more expansive here, arguing that "the nation is in trouble" and suggesting that "something must be done about it now that the election is over." Reston predicts that "the victory of one man or one party," unspecified, will not solve everything, and recommends instead:

> . . . a philosophy of cooperation rather than confrontation between the contending forces at home and abroad, and a change in the attitudes of the people toward the irresistible transformations brought about by science, machinery and the turbulent shifts of population in the industrial world and the rise in power of the oil-producing nations.

By coming to this incisive cure-all more directly, the Revised Version finds room near the end for the timely observation that, "Obviously there has been a conservative sweep of opinion in the nation." "But it does not follow," Reston warns, that any conservative policy will get through Congress. This oddly specific, and probably wrong, statement is necessary to bring the amended column back to its crowning generality, which is that "the winners" (#1) or "Mr. Reagan and his supporters" (#2)

> may well be looking around for some way to bring the White House, the Congress and the other separate principalities of the nation into some kind of an agreement on how to cooperate in the national interest in the coming years.

Who but James Reston could have guessed, before the returns were even in, that the winner might want everyone to help serve the national interest? The man's a genius.

My favorite morning-after headline also was in the *Times*. It was over a story by the reporter who's been following the pollsters and political analysts. His final dispatch on their haruspications was entitled:

> **1980 Electorate Seen As Older, Whiter And More Inclined To Vote For Reagan**

The insight that voters were inclined to vote for Reagan no doubt explains why so many of them did so. Too bad this inclination was not divined before the electorate had acted upon it.

Once again, the pollsters were spectacularly wrong in their pre-election predictions, so you'd think they'd be abashed about the post-election instant analysis. But there are reputations—and livings—to be salvaged. The most brazen was President Carter's own pollster, Pat Caddell, who was telling all his pals in the press in time for Wednesday's papers that he'd seen it all coming. Up to the election he'd been claiming that the race was neck and neck, but he argued preposterously the morning after that there had been a massive shift in the last two days. There he was again on Thursday, near the top of the *Times*'s lead story, sagely calling the result "a massive protest vote," but reassuring Hedrick Smith that, "We've known for a long time there's been a lot of frustration and anger out there."

Caddell didn't mention that he is largely responsible for Carter's substitution of imagery for action, which is one of the things voters massively protested about. Caddell's record now stands at one narrow squeak (Carter in 1976) and two record-breaking disasters (McGovern in 1972 and Carter in 1980). The great Washington principle of upward failure should assure him a prosperous future.

M.E.K.

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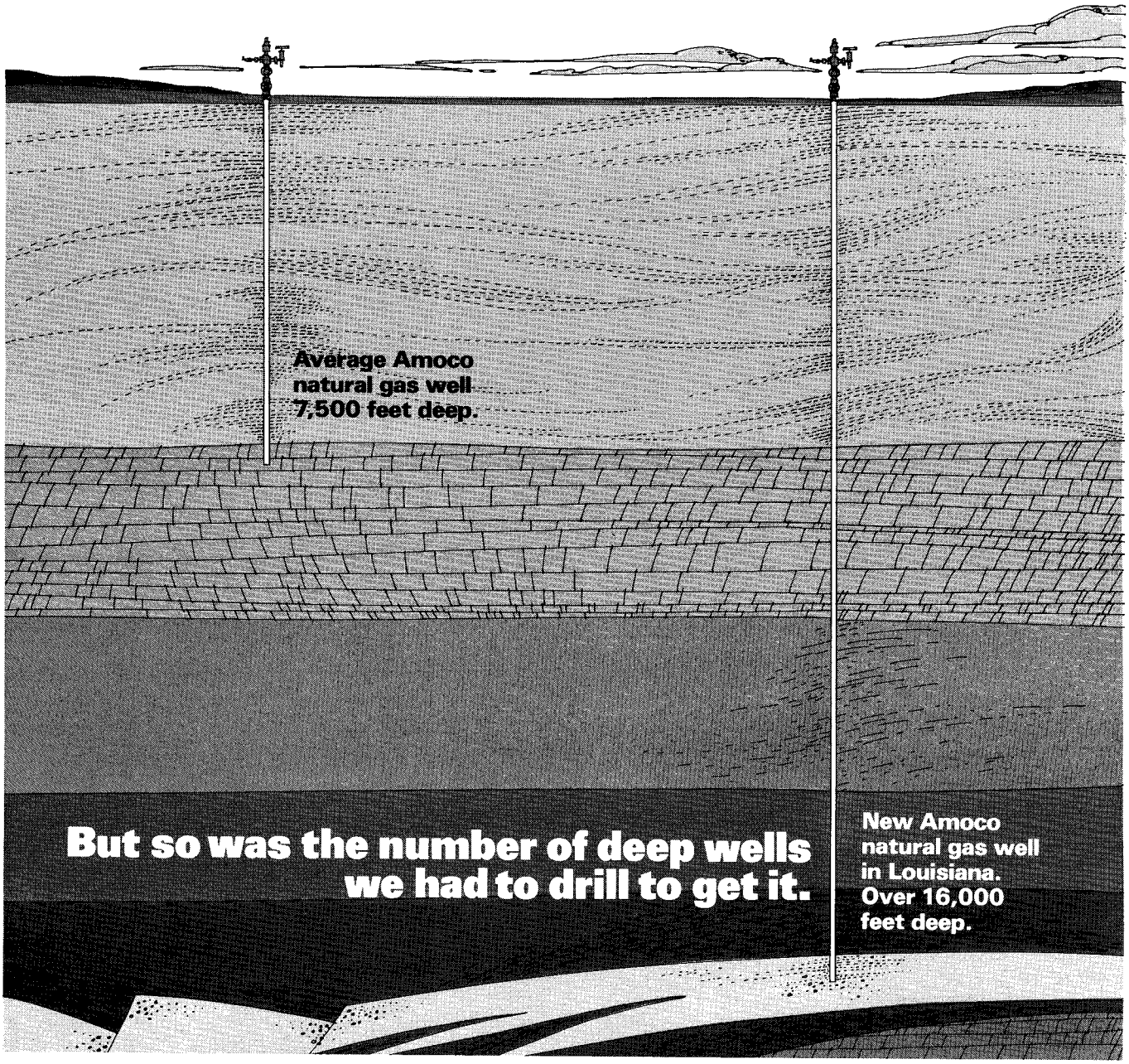
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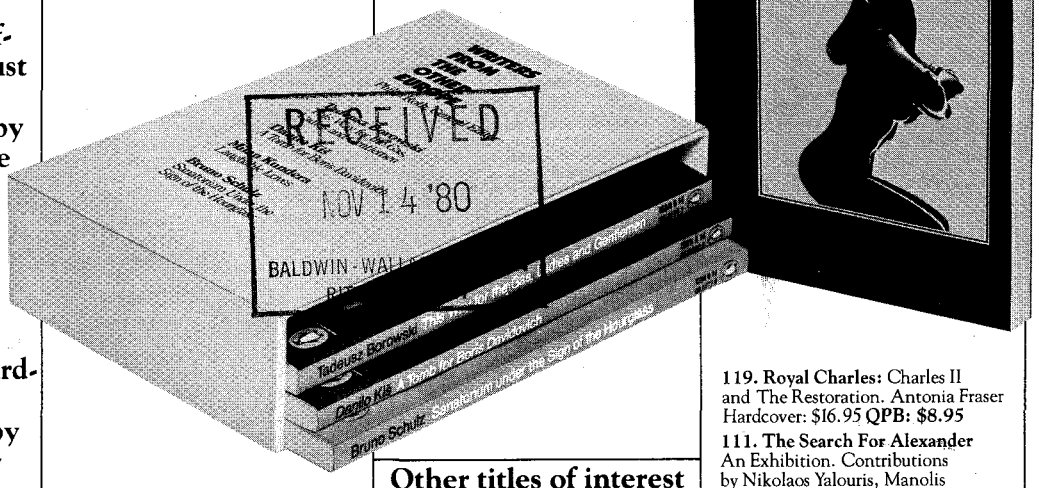

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